

* Betty Carter—Hall of Fame * Herbie Hancock—Jazz Artist, Jazz Album * Blue Note—Record Label * Steve Turre—Trombone * Miles Davis—Reissue of the Year * John Scofield—Electric Jazz Group * Nicholas Payton—Trumpet

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* Males Davis—Reissue of the Year * John Scofield—Electric Jazz Group * Nicholas Payton—Trumpet

cassandra
wilson
Female Vocalist of the Year

On Top

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CRITICS POLL WINNERS**

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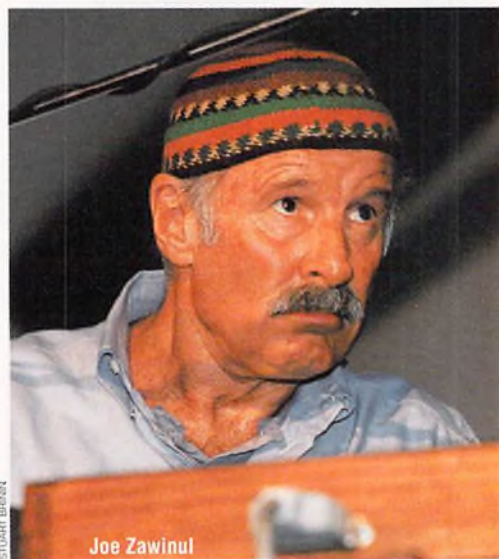
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Greg Osby



Joe Zawinul

for 1999

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Reconciliation

cassandra
wilson

DOWN BEAT 47TH ANNUAL CRITICS POLL

in 1986, Cassandra Wilson was talking with a friend in the backyard garden of a downtown Manhattan restaurant when the subject of awards came up. As if on cue, she launched into a melodramatic Oscar acceptance speech. For those 30 seconds you could almost see her in a Bob Mackie gown holding the statuette.

Since then, she's won a lot of awards. Oscar hasn't come knocking, but she has won a Soul Train Lady of Soul Award, a 1996 Grammy and she has been a regular winner of Down Beat's polls. Since 1994, she has won the Readers Poll as Female Vocalist of the Year, and this year marks her fourth consecutive award in that category in the Critics Poll.

Cassandra's Down Beat awards are special. "I've known about them for a long time, and known the history of them from reading my father's Down Beats way back in the day," she notes.

Although Wilson dotes on history, it's her present that is so commanding. Sales of her latest recording, *Traveling Miles* (Blue Note), are surging, and sales of her two previous recordings, *New Moon Daughter* (Blue Note, 1996) and *Blue Light Till Dawn* (Blue Note, 1993), respectively have topped 650,000 and 400,000 units worldwide. These are *otherworldly* numbers in a genre where sales of 50,000 units is considered stratospheric.

Lately, the only denizens of such rarified air are vocalists, specifically Wilson and Diana Krall. After hyping *this* trumpeter, or *that* saxophonist, or several fusions of jazz and the latest club music, the lords of jazz have realized that vocalists connect with the public in a way that instrumentalists don't.

Wilson's sales, and Krall's slightly smaller but still very impressive tally, make them the franchise players at their labels. Meanwhile, Patricia Barber's *Modern Cool* has given Premonition (an independent label) solid footing, and Stacey Kent's *Close Your Eyes* has done likewise for Chiaroscuro. It's a safe bet that Abbey Lincoln, Shirley Horn and Dee Dee Bridgewater will survive even the most pernicious roster downsizing at their imprints.

"Well, I think it's for obvious reasons," Wilson says of vocalists' popularity. "Singers use words. And naturally, audiences tune into words. They tune into the lyric, to the story. They want to hear the stories. Not to say that you can't tell stories instrumentally. But it's a lot easier to access them [with words]."

That, and singers are more distinctive. I've made the time-honored mistake of confusing Herbie Nichols for Monk. Jazz-addicted friends of mine have mistaken Freddie Webster for early Miles, and mixed up Arts Taylor and Blakey. But no serious music fan has ever confused Ella, Billie or Sassy for anyone else; they are too unique.

Furthermore, while few people can even fathom the technical facility required to play even simple scales on a saxophone (much less play "A Night In Tunisia" like Bird did), nearly everybody—whether as a grade school student or as a guest at a birthday party—has sung at some time in their life. Wilson's music, like that of all great vocalists, easily transcends the sometimes daunting learning curve in jazz.

History's great jazz vocalists made a strong impact on Wilson as she matured. Betty Carter, this year's inductee into the Down Beat Hall of Fame, was an especially vital inspiration, in both musical and non-musical avenues. When asked about the biggest aspects of Carter's influence, Wilson, lounging on the sofa in her Upper Manhattan digs, sits up and zones in a bit.

"Her independence. The fact that she had her own record company, that she had been at the helm of all of her business endeavors. Well, not for all of her career, but for most of her career. Musically, she's been the bandleader; she's

Female Vocalist

- 231 **Cassandra Wilson**
- 119 Shirley Horn
- 111 Abbey Lincoln
- 75 Dee Dee Bridgewater
- 70 Sheila Jordan
- 61 Diana Krall
- 42 Dianne Reeves
- 33 Betty Carter
- 17 Patricia Barber
- 11 Dominique Eade
- 10 Etta James

BY MARTIN JOHNSON
PHOTOS BY JOHN ABBOTT



been the school that musicians have traveled through.

"I listened to Betty for a long time, you know. Back in, say, late '70s/early '80s, there was a period that I didn't listen to anything but Betty Carter."

Why was that?

"I was in love with her voice. I was in love with her carriage. Everything about her seemed so new and so innovative and so revolutionary. She was a step beyond Sarah in terms of her relationship with the guys in the band. She was really more

involved in the entire process of creating and music. She was a part of the band. She was in the middle of it. She was hands-on. And you could see that in the performance, that everything was being orchestrated by her. She didn't have a musical director, so to speak. Everything was pretty much flowing through her perspective. Not to say that Sarah Vaughan didn't, but Sarah Vaughan was more of a conventional singer in the sense that she was always apart from the band. There may have been sometimes a little repar-

tee, I think, in terms of improvising. But for the most part, she did everything out in front of the band, and the band was pretty much background."

Whether on stage, where she shares the foreground with her musicians, or at home on a summery afternoon, Wilson orchestrates everything around her. Although Wilson resides in Manhattan, she lives far away from the city's renowned hustle and bustle. Even the short walk from the nearby subway station puts you in another world. The ratio of nature to industry is much higher near her place than it is in most of the city. There are big trees that look as if they were already sizable when they were the backdrop for home jam sessions of Bud Powell or Jackie McLean or many of the other jazz greats who once lived in this part of town.

Unlike the narrow buildings with shoe-box-sized apartments for which Manhattan is infamous, Wilson's building has a rotunda-like lobby with a table full of flyers for community events. Her apartment is spacious and a canny mix of classic and contemporary. In the dining

**"It's a sound.
It's a certain kind of
music that I'm
looking for, and I'm
searching for it,
and I'm using these
elements to get to it.
It's not just about
folk music or
blues music,
it's not just about
jazz music—
it's a confluence."**

room, atop an ornate table with an intricate lace tablecloth, lies a computer disk (Wilson owns three computers, and after some initial reluctance, she has become an avid fan of cyberspace). There are African masks and sculptures in each corner, and in the living room, over the stereo, hangs a huge, brilliant painting portraying Billie Holiday and Abbey Lincoln meeting in a Parisian café.

Wilson has lived in the city for almost 20 years, but she settled in this place nine years ago because the neighborhood and

“Betty Carter was a part of the band.

And you could see that in the performance, that everything was being orchestrated by her.”

building had more of a Southern feel. “I imagine most of the black people that lived here came from the South, and they were always bringing the South here.”

Which is key to understanding Cassandra’s music. Despite its Bayou roots, jazz is a very Northern, urban music, often to the exclusion of Southern black traditions. Geographic differences tend to separate blacks moreso than class or light-skinned/dark-skinned issues. By stereotype, Northerners are more career-focused and driven, while Southerners are more connected to their roots. Wilson, a Mississippi native, reintegrated the South back into jazz.

“Coming from Mississippi, naturally, I have been exposed to a wider range of music and also exposed to the combinations, the way that the people down South tend to mix all these styles,” she explains. “I believe that is more of a Southern thing, or a rural thing.”

Actually, this mixing of styles was a Brooklyn thang, when she first moved to New York City. Wilson quickly fell with

the M-Base crowd, a group of musicians, most notably Steve Coleman and Greg Osby, who fused jazz, blues and hip-hop. Wilson’s first recordings, *Point Of View* and *Days Aweigh* (both JMT), presented a delightful mix of styles (the track “Days Aweigh” featured Wilson dueting with fellow Mississippian Olu Dara). Her third recording, *Blue Skies* (JMT, 1988), was a collection of standards rendered with a straightahead trio. It was her first big hit, but it was also a mixed blessing. Polygram, for obvious reasons, wanted another collection of standards, but Wilson wanted to pursue her own vision.

When she got the chance in 1993 on *Blue Light Till Dawn*, she realized every recording artist’s biggest dream. She won widespread acclaim for doing her record her way. She was assisted by producer Craig Street, whom she met in her building. They created a jazz that was cooler yet dense. It didn’t rush to you as most jazz does; you had to come to it, but the music wasn’t distant or abstract. She has continued to hone that sound


through *New Moon Daughter* and *Traveling Miles*. In a way, by reshaping jazz, the penultimate American music, Wilson enjoyed the apocryphal American experience: self-actualization affirmed by massive popular appeal.

Reclining on the sofa across from the painting, Wilson speaks a lot like she sings, in deliberate, carefully chosen phrases that she sometimes lets hang in the air before she continues. However, sometimes she leans forward and addresses a topic with the urgency of a college professor short on time. Such was the case when asked about the changes in the recording processes between her beginnings and now.

“I’ve learned that more time is better, as a rule. The more time you’re able to spend recording and thinking about what you are going to record, and taking time out from it to listen to it, I think the better it is. I’ve learned that. Remember, *Point Of View* was the very first album, on JMT, an independent label that was a stepchild to Polygram-Verve. So I had no idea about how the process was going to unfold in terms of, you know, you do a recording, then what happens? At that level, *Point Of View* was just really a documentation of the time, you know, of Steve Coleman and those cats, the music that was happening at that time.

“As the money got larger, the budgets got larger. There was more time to think about, What’s the album about? What’s the concept? What do you want to say to an audience? I don’t think I really had that realization with *Point Of View*. I think I started to have it with *Days Aweigh*. That was far more cohesive. And still, it was pretty rambling. But I don’t really believe I started to understand how important it was to have an underlying premise, something that would hold everything on the album together, until *Dance To The Drums Again* or *She Who Weeps*. There are literary references; like, there’s a book that I’ve read or there’s a philosophy that I’m thinking about.”


And what were the premises behind *Blue Light Till Dawn* and *New Moon Daughter*?



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"I like to look at those recordings as rebirth pieces. I mean, real returning to very strong memories of adolescence and those years of learning to play the guitar, and suddenly being attracted to this other kind of music, this folk music and this rock music. It's going back to that time, remembering it, and actually coming to terms with it. Saying to myself now that it's OK to have listened to this music and to have gone through that period, and including that sound and those memories in what I'm doing today.

"For a long time, I thought I was schizophrenic. I might still be. Yeah, still crazy after all these years. But, you know, there was a time when there were two separate parts to my musical personality. There was a part that was just jazz, pure jazz—bebop, Charlie Parker, Betty Carter, Miles Davis, Monk. Then there was a part of me that liked Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, Judy Collins, Richie Havens, Robert Johnson, the blues tradition. They were like separate parts of my musical life, and [until then], I never was able to integrate the two."

Does *Traveling Miles* represent a further merger?

"It is, in a sense. I think it's also at the same time reaching for something else, something that's beyond that. It's something that exists only in my mind right now. It's a sound. It's a certain kind of music that I'm looking for, and I'm searching for it, and I'm using these elements to get to it. It's not just about folk music or blues music, it's not just about jazz music—it's a confluence."

Wilson stands at the point of juncture where modern jazz flows into the blues tradition, where the rural roots of the South reach reconciliation with the urban mania of the North. This is what makes her such a vital figure in the '90s. Just as the '80s were about the deification of jazz's glorious past, which was a necessary step (show me a jazz lover who thinks this music gets the respect it deserves from American cultural institutions, and I'll show you a phony), some of this decade's most innovative jazz has been about fusions with other musical traditions. In many ways, the best music from the African-American tradition has come from merging seemingly disparate genres. It worked with the old Saturday night/Sunday morning recipe for soul music, and perhaps it's at work between rural South and urban North in Wilson's music.

So what's next for Cassandra Wilson?

"The next thing is some composed work. I want to compose music."

Compose music, as opposed to writing songs?

"Yes, I'd love to do an album that didn't have my voice on it. Maybe had my voice on it, but not singing lyrics, but just functioning as an instrument." **DB**



Dizzy Gillespie—“Finally we have the whole story.”

—Ted Gioia

“A must for jazz aficionados, this exhaustively researched biography features a supporting cast that reads like a who’s who of jazz.... A vibrant blend of meticulous scholarship, swinging anecdote, and astute music criticism.”

—*Publisher’s Weekly*

“Jazz biography at its most accessible and revealing.”—Greg Tate, *Emerge*

“FUTURE JAZZ is the real thing. Mandel is one of the few writers in jazz today who gets close. He clearly has a grasp of the movement of this music, the undercurrents, the nuances, the text and subtext.”

—Cassandra Wilson

“At last someone’s beginning to take this music seriously! Howard’s passion is admirable.”

—John Zorn

A CD companion to *Future Jazz* is available from Knitting Factory Records in cooperation with Blue Note Records.



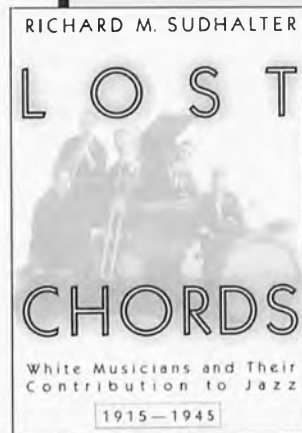
“Beautifully written and supremely readable.”

—Tom Nolan, *San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle*

“No one who reads it will ever again be able to take seriously the argument that all white jazz is derivative and second-rate.”

—*Baltimore Sun* *

This book features many of the artists highlighted on the 2 CD *Lost Chords: White Musicians and Their Contribution to Jazz 1915-1945*, available from Retrieval Records (RTR79018).



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HALL OF FAME

Betty Carter was always eager to share her jazz philosophy, whether it was with a protégé in her band, a young musician she took under her wing or a new audience. It was as if she were on a mission, preaching the jazz gospel and committed to winning disciples to the music.

In November 1997, less than a year before her death at age 69, Carter headlined the fifth annual Beijing Jazz Festival and wowed the crowd with her potent display of vocal improvisation. After the show, Carter, who was the highest profile jazz artist to play the fledgling event in Communist China, was interviewed by a Beijing television station. She offered viewers a lesson in liberty when she explained, "Jazz means that you can speak your mind musically and be accepted for doing it. You can do anything you want: change the tempo, put a new meter on a tune, anything. You don't have to conform to what other people expect you to do."

That sums up the jazz life of Betty Carter, the newest member of the Down Beat Hall of Fame. In addition to being one of the most innovative and daring jazz vocalists, she was also an educator par excellence, schoolmarming dozens of musicians who owe a debt of gratitude to her exacting mentorship.

One such beneficiary is jazz violinist Miri Ben-Ari, 27, who just released her debut CD, *Sahara*, on the Half Note label. It includes the tune "Room 511," dedicated to Carter's memory. "Before I met Ms. Carter, I was trying to sound like other violinists such as Jean-Luc Ponty," says Ben-Ari, who was a participant in Carter's Jazz Ahead educational program. "But she insisted that you have to find your own style. She instilled in me the confidence I needed to be myself and seek my own identity. She wanted me to be original."

Hailing from the Detroit area, Carter sat in with such beboppers as Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker as a teenager in the mid '40s before joining Lionel Hampton's band from 1948-'51. From there she worked with Gigi Gryce, Ray Bryant and in 1961 recorded the classic *Ray Charles And Betty Carter* album. In 1969, she launched her own Bet-Car label and continued recording while raising a family.

However, it wasn't until 1988 that she scored a multi-disc deal with a major, Verve, where she enjoyed her greatest success. "I had been a big fan of hers since the '60s," says Richard Seidel, senior VP of A&R at the Verve Music Group. "Betty deserved to be on a major label so she could be appreciated by a wider audience. She was one of the most adventurous singers jazz ever knew. Plus, she was an incredible talent scout, rivaled only by Art Blakey and Miles Davis."

Seidel notes that Carter set high standards. "Betty challenged other musicians as much as anyone. But she challenged herself even more. I remember seeing her at the Blue Note in New York, where she was playing a full week of shows after touring Europe for six weeks. I asked her how she felt, if she was jet-lagged. She said, 'Jet lag, what's that? I work.' She never stopped."

With her unflagging energy in mind, it's no wonder that the recent concert honoring her at Majestic Theater in Brooklyn was titled "The Music Never Stops: A Tribute to Betty Carter." In the spirit of the Jazz Ahead program she founded in 1993 at 651 Arts in Brooklyn (the program is now replicated at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.), several young musicians inspired by Carter performed their own music. Carter band alums such as tenor saxophonist Don Braden and bassist Curtis Lundy also appeared. Pianist Geri Allen and drummer

Hall of Fame

- 99 Betty Carter
- 72 Milt Jackson
- 55 Joe Williams
- 46 Clark Terry
- 33 Antonio Carlos Jobim
- 32 Jimmy Blanton
- 29 Muhal Richard Abrams
- 28 Red Norvo
- 25 Jo Jones
- 25 McCoy Tyner
- 21 Don Cherry
- 20 Wayne Shorter
- 19 Kenny Dorham
- 18 Paul Chambers
- 17 Randy Weston
- 16 Horace Tapscott
- 15 Doc Cheatham
- 14 Jaki Byard
- 13 Carmen McRae
- 12 Hank Mobley

BY DAN OUELLETTE

bettyCarter





BY ANDREW LEFLEY

mindful people who were just as stubborn as she was."

One musician who never giggered with her but benefited greatly from Carter's wisdom is Javon Jackson, who asked her to produce his Blue Note debut, *When The Time Is Right*, in 1993. "I wanted to get someone dynamic who could lead me in the right direction," Jackson says. "Betty really pushed us to make our presentation as unique as possible. She encouraged risk-taking. Even with my new CD, I was thinking about how to come up with something different. I'm still searching for that sense of individuality Betty encouraged where if three guys say seven, you should say nine."

Carter earned many awards, including a Grammy, an honorary doctorate from Williams College in Williamstown, Mass., and the National Medal of Arts. She also frequently topped the Female Vocalist category in Down Beat's polls. So, it's a fitting tribute to the esteemed vocalist and brilliant talent scout that she enters the Hall of Fame in recognition of her exceptional singing talents, uncompromising vision and unmitigated commitment to the music. **DB**

The Hall of Fame

Legends in jazz, blues and beyond can be elected into the Down Beat Hall of Fame by way of the annual Readers Poll (designated by "R") or Critics Poll ("C"). It all started in 1952 with the readers; the critics got into the game later, in 1961. With this month's addition of Betty Carter, there are currently 91 Down Beat Hall of Famers, listed below in chronological order of their induction. —ed.

1952	Louis Armstrong (R)	1978	Joe Venuti (R)
1953	Glenn Miller (R)		Rahsaan Roland Kirk (C)
1954	Stan Kenton (R)	1979	Ella Fitzgerald (R)
1955	Charlie Parker (R)		Lennie Tristano (C)
1956	Duke Ellington (R)	1980	Dexter Gordon (R)
1957	Benny Goodman (R)		Max Roach (C)
1958	Count Basie (R)	1981	Art Blakey (R)
1959	Lester Young (R)		Bill Evans (C)
1960	Dizzy Gillespie (R)	1982	Art Pepper (R)
1961	Billie Holiday (R)		Fats Navarro (C)
	Coleman Hawkins (C)	1983	Stephane Grappelli (R)
1962	Miles Davis (R)		Albert Ayler (C)
	Blix Beiderbecke (C)	1984	Oscar Peterson (R)
1963	Thelonious Monk (R)		Sun Ra (C)
	Jelly Roll Morton (C)	1985	Sarah Vaughan (R)
1964	Eric Dolphy (R)		Zoot Sims (C)
	Art Tatum (C)	1986	Stan Getz (R)
1965	John Coltrane (R)		Gil Evans (C)
	Earl Hines (C)	1987	Lionel Hampton (R)
1966	Bud Powell (R)		Johnny Dodds (C)
	Charlie Christian (C)		Thad Jones (C)
1967	Billy Strayhorn (R)		Teddy Wilson (C)
	Bessie Smith (C)	1988	Jaco Pastorius (R)
1968	Wes Montgomery (R)		Kenny Clarke (C)
	Sidney Bechet (C)	1989	Woody Shaw (R)
	Fats Waller (C)		Chet Baker (C)
1969	Ornette Coleman (R)	1990	Red Rodney (R)
	Pee Wee Russell (C)		Mary Lou Williams (C)
	Jack Teagarden (C)	1991	Lee Morgan (R)
1970	Jimi Hendrix (R)		John Carter (C)
	Johnny Hocpes (C)	1992	Maynard Ferguson (R)
1971	Charles Mingus (R)		James P. Johnson (C)
	Roy Eldridge (C)	1993	Gerry Mulligan (R)
	Django Reinhardt (C)		Ed Blackwell (C)
1972	Gene Krupa (R)	1994	Dave Brubeck (R)
	Clifford Brown (C)		Frank Zappa (C)
1973	Sonny Rollins (R)	1995	J.J. Johnson (R)
	Fletcher Henderson (C)		Julius Hemphill (C)
1974	Buddy Rich (R)	1996	Horace Silver (R)
	Ben Webster (C)		Artie Shaw (C)
1975	Cannonball Adderley (R)	1997	Nat "King" Cole (R)
	Cecil Taylor (C)		Tony Williams (C)
1976	Woody Herman (R)	1998	Elvin Jones (C)
	King Oliver (C)		Frank Sinatra (R)
1977	Paul Desmond (R)	1999	Betty Carter (C)
	Benny Carter (C)		

this sense of the moment to the bandstand. She was always stretching and trying new things. I appreciated her taking chances, throwing herself into the music by taking harmonic risks and not playing it safe. For example, we did 'Giant Steps,' which is pretty adventurous for a vocalist to tackle. But Betty viewed her voice as an instrument capable of anything."

While Allen concedes that she and Carter didn't always see eye-to-eye on musical matters, she says Carter always treated her musicians fairly. "Betty's opinions were very clear. She may not have agreed with my musical ideas, but she always listened to and respected my opinions."

Drummer Kenny Washington, a Carter band member in the late '70s, recalls how gracious the leader was to her audiences. He remembers recording *The Audience With Betty Carter* (initially released on Bet-Car, later reissued on Verve) at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco. "Everyone who attended the shows was given a rose. At the end of the evening, not one rose was left in the hall. And Betty sent everyone who attended the shows a copy of the album when it came out."

While Washington stresses he learned a lot under her charge, like most Carter band members over the years he also has stories of how exacting she could be on the bandstand. But he looks back fondly on how she ran the show. "Oh, yeah, I got chewed out, but I later realized she was right. She could have been a little more tactful, but she kept you on your toes all the time. You had to be strong to play with her. She didn't want any weaklings. She wanted strong-

"Betty was one of a kind, a consummate artist right up there with Miles."

—Jack DeJohette

Jack DeJohette, who both performed with Carter, served as co-artistic directors of the event.

"Betty was one of a kind, a consummate artist right up there with Miles," says DeJohette, who first played with Carter in 1966 in a band consisting of pianist John Hicks and bassist Cecil McBee. "She was a great band director who encouraged musicians to avoid clichés and speak in their own voices. I had a great time with her then, but an even better experience reuniting with her for the *Feed The Fire* album [1988] and tour with Dave Holland and Geri. We were all challenged by her to the end of our limits."

Allen agrees. "The *Feed The Fire* tour was a porthole for me. Every night I learned something new. Betty brought

DOWN BEAT 47TH ANNUAL CRITICS POLL

JAZZ ARTIST AND JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Jazz Artist of the Year

- 66 **Herbie Hancock**
- 63 Wynton Marsalis
- 50 Joe Lovano
- 50 Dave Douglas
- 48 Sonny Rollins
- 37 Brad Mehldau
- 29 Randy Weston
- 29 Ornette Coleman
- 23 Tommy Flanagan
- 20 Dave Holland
- 18 Cassandra Wilson
- 17 Jesus "Chucho" Valdés
- 16 Chick Corea
- 16 Tom Harrell
- 14 McCoy Tyner
- 13 Kenny Barron
- 13 Pat Metheny
- 12 Roy Hargrove
- 10 Keith Jarrett
- 10 John Scofield
- 10 Diana Krall
- 10 James Williams
- 10 Gonzalo Rubalcaba

Jazz Album of the Year

- 62 **Herbie Hancock, *Gershwin's World* (Verve)**
- 43 Brad Mehldau, *Songs—Art of the Trio Vol. III* (Warner Bros.)
- 34 Dave Holland, *Points of View* (ECM)
- 30 Joe Lovano, *Trio Fascination* (Blue Note)
- 29 Cassandra Wilson, *Traveling Miles* (Blue Note)
- 20 Dave Douglas, *Magic Triangle* (Arabesque Jazz)
- 19 Keith Jarrett, *Tokyo '96* (ECM)
- 19 Jesus "Chucho" Valdés, *Bele Bele En La Habana* (Blue Note)
- 17 Andy Bey, *Shades Of Bey* (Evidence)
- 17 Peter Brötzmann, *Chicago Octet/Tenet* (Okkadisk)
- 15 Greg Osby, *Banned In New York* (Blue Note)
- 15 Patricia Barber, *Modern Cool* (Premonition)
- 13 Chick Corea and Origin, *Live At The Blue Note* (Stretch)
- 12 Dave Douglas, *Charms Of The Night Sky* (Winter & Winter)
- 12 Tommy Flanagan, *Sunset And The Mocking Bird* (Blue Note)
- 12 Gary Burton, *Like Minds* (Concord)
- 12 Steve Coleman, *Genesis & The Opening Of The Way* (RCA Victor)
- 12 Charlie Haden/Chris Anderson, *None But The Lonely Heart* (Naim)
- 10 Michel Petrucciani, *Solo Live* (Dreyfus)
- 10 Don Sebesky, *I Remember Bill* (RCA Victor)

Herbie Hancock possesses a mountain of confidence.

"I'm going to take my bath while talking with you," says a relaxed Hancock in the midst of discussing his double win in the Down Beat Critics Poll for Jazz Artist and Jazz Album of the Year, his first victory in either category. All right, whatever he wants. He's the winner, after all. The sound of hot water filling a tub rumbles in the background.

"If I decide to take on a project, there might be something I can discover while working on it," says the 59-year-old pianist on the phone from the washroom of his Los Angeles offices. "And whatever genre the project may be, there might be something I can put into it that can give it a character other people will appreciate. It's just music—I don't make it a war between this form of music or that one.

"This explains *Gershwin's World*. Were we trying to make a jazz record or trying to make music? I decided I wanted to make music. I had made traditional jazz records in the past, and at this point I was not so interested in doing that. That doesn't mean that I will not do it again, and I may change my mind tomorrow. But we don't have to do records in the same way each time."

A devout Buddhist for the past 26 years, Hancock talks like a man with genuine self-assurance in his art. After 40 years as a professional musician, he has reached a stage in his career where the music has been stripped down to its bare essence. It's beyond category or classification. He plays to create, share, discover and take risks—for the sheer exultation of melody, harmony and rhythm. He understands his patriarchal role in jazz, and beyond, and knows that when he records an album, it has the potential to be widely influential.

But in a year where the pianist has flourished, exploring new territory with *Gershwin's World* (Verve) and revisiting the old during a 20-city reunion tour in fall '98 with the Headhunters (not to mention relishing in the release of a six-CD box set of his early to mid-'60s work on Blue Note), Hancock believes that music plays a less significant role in his life today than it did 40 years ago.

"I used to see myself first and foremost as a musician. Now, I see myself as a human being," says Hancock, stripped down to his bare essence and by now plenty wet in the tub. "I'm concentrating on the art of living. I realize that music is not about B-flat 7ths and A-

minors. It's an expression of life, the means to tell a story. Without a life, there's no story."

The story of *Gershwin's World* began in early 1997, when the gears started churning in the record industry to conceive creative ways to celebrate George Gershwin's 100th birthday in '98. Robert Sadin, the album's producer, approached Hancock with an idea to construct a Gershwin tribute that would stand apart from the glut of Gershwin tributes set to hit the market.

"Herbie was very enthusiastic," says Sadin, who worked for the first time with Hancock on the album. "At the Vienne Jazz Festival, Herbie and I spent 12 hours discussing the project, and he was like a geyser of reactions and ideas."

Sadin and Hancock developed a complex plan to create a different musical setting for each song on the album. They formed various ensembles, used singers, paired Hancock with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra ("Lullaby," Ravel's "Concerto For Piano And Orchestra In G, 2nd Movement") and in a duet with Chick Corea ("Blueberry Rhyme"), and featured Hancock solo ("Embraceable You").

"We did not want to put Gershwin on a pedestal as the father of jazz, realizing that jazz existed before Gershwin did," Hancock says. "We wanted to show that Gershwin grew out of that, and not the other way around. For example, W.C. Handy's 'St. Louis Blues' represents the origins of jazz. James P. Johnson was in a way a mentor to Gershwin, so we included 'Blueberry Rhyme.' And the Duke Ellington piece 'Cotton Tail' is based primarily off of Gershwin's 'Rhythm' changes."



BY JASON KORANSKY

herbiehancock







MICHAEL SEIDEL

The opening track of the album, a 55-second African drum groove with Hancock comping a single statement from "Fascinating Rhythm," developed spontaneously in the studio. While the percussionists were warming up, Hancock decided to roll tape. Soon he started comping along with them, and before they knew it they had 20 minutes of great material.

"What could be more fascinating than African percussion? You start asking, 'What is this album going to be all about?' It's mysterious," Hancock says. "We didn't want a plain swinging jazz album. Percussion gave a completeness to the sound."

Hancock never records with singers, and he saw this album as a perfect opportunity to explore working with vocals. But again, he threw a twist into the equation.

"The question was what kind of singers were we going to have," Hancock says. "Jazz singers? No. People would expect jazz singers on the project. That's when the names Stevie Wonder and Joni Mitchell came up. Kathleen Battle is a wonderful opera singer, and I've admired her work for years."

An enormous amount of thought went into assembling the personnel for the Grammy-winning album. For example, Sadin and Hancock constructed a drummer-less octet, using percussion instead, to record a multilayered version of "Here Come De Honey Man" from *Porgy And Bess*. "We were thinking of an ensemble where there were enough horns to give the music a fresh harmonic coloration, and balanced this with a multitextured percussion groove," Sadin says.

Neither of the saxophonists in this group—James Carter and Kenny Garrett—

had previously worked with Hancock, and the bassist, Ira Coleman, had only worked with Hancock once on a Tony Williams trio project.

For Garrett, this provided a chance to record with one of his heroes. "There were so many great musical ideas flowing through the studio," says the alto player. "Herbie's the type of guy who's always trying to find another way to present the music. He would have a killer arrangement, and then he would change it."

Coleman ended up appearing on seven tracks of the album, the most of any sideman. "Playing with Herbie, the only analogy that I can use is that it was like watching a grandmaster play chess," the bassist says. "For years playing with numerous pianists, I have noticed that when someone tries to re-harmonize, they play a lot on the piano. Herbie on the other hand was hearing everything in his head. I would see his fingers move until he just played the right thing. It was eye-opening."

For Sadin, the most impressive part of working closely with Hancock on *Gershwin's World* was the pianist's devotion to the project. "The thing that knocked me out more than anything else, besides just how consistently great he played, was how hard he worked. When he did the 'Embraceable You' piano solo, he worked on the chords and sat at the piano alone for eight hours. He strove to record the best music he could."

Hancock's long-time musical partner and friend Wayne Shorter appears on several tracks of *Gershwin's World*, and the pair resumed their duo tour this summer. They share a bond far beyond the bandstand.

"It's about time he won the awards,"

the saxophonist says. "Herbie touches many areas of the artist's life without the piano. He manages to be at 10 different places at once. There's a human element there. Herbie was telling me that sometimes when he does music workshops, he never talks about music at all. This is the other dimension of Herbie. He's a magnet that draws out of people music and ideas that might otherwise be swept under the rug. This award gives credence to his determination."

"An avid reader of *Down Beat* might think that this determination means working many hours in the studio, working many hours in plotting and planning and getting the stage set," continues Shorter, a devout Buddhist as well. "I'm not talking about that. There are other aspects of a person's life that bring them fortune, and this fortune will penetrate this person's profession. It's kind of mystical. When Herbie does what he does, this comes from a sense of deep human appreciation that drives his creativity. This converts itself into the fulfillment of his music."

Hancock looks back with amazement after listening to his *Complete Blue Note Sixties Sessions*. "What I really noticed was the variety," Hancock says.

Michael Cuscuna produced the Blue Note box, and has worked with the pianist numerous times in recent years. Comparing Hancock's early work with his playing today, Cuscuna hears definitive growth.

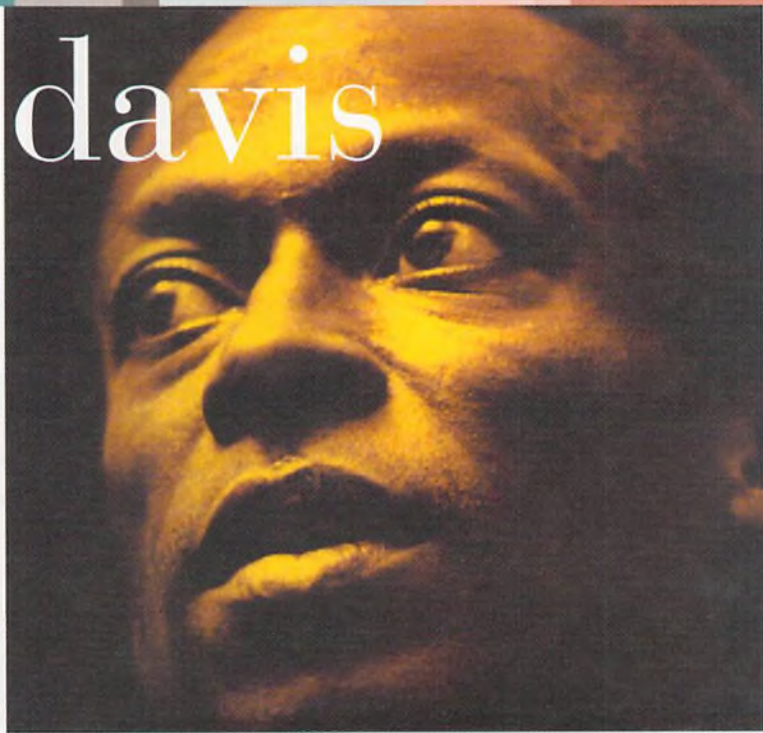
"He has the same feeling, but he's grown so much," says Cuscuna, the critics' choice for Producer of the Year. "A few years ago I put together a reunion of the band that played on Bobby Hutcherson's *Components* album. Bobby told me he never heard anyone Herbie's age who just continued to grow. We talked about how often when someone explores funk or fusion, or different realms of music, when they get back to straight-ahead jazz it takes them a while to regain their chops. But with Herbie, he never lost a thing and just keeps on growing."

For Hancock, this growth can be credited to the vision he has discovered with Buddhism and a lesson he learned in the '60s from Miles Davis. "I was a jazz snob, except I listened to classical music," he says. "I moved away from r&b and paid no attention to pop. But Miles was listening to everything. I thought, What am I trying to protect? What am I doing by putting jazz on a pedestal and placing a hierarchy on something that has to do with human expression?"

"There are always new ways to record an album. *Gershwin's World* was just one way to do it. Perhaps it was a pebble that will open the door for other ways to approach the music." **DB**

miles davis

bitches brew



REISSUE OF THE YEAR

Reissue of the Year

- 106 Miles Davis, *The Complete Bitches Brew Sessions* (Columbia/Legacy)**
- 105 John Coltrane, *The Complete Impulse! Studio Recordings* (Impulse!)
- 43 Herbie Hancock, *The Complete Blue Note '60s Sessions* (Blue Note)
- 33 Various Artists, *Complete JATP On Verve 1944-'49* (Verve)
- 27 Charles Mingus, *Complete 1959 Columbia Recordings* (Columbia/Legacy)
- 21 Jimmy Giuffre Trio, *Free Fall* (Columbia/Legacy)
- 20 Hank Mobley, *Complete Blue Note Hank Mobley 1950s Sessions* (Mosaic)
- 18 Miles Davis, *At Carnegie Hall* (Columbia/Legacy)
- 14 Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington, *Côte d'Azur Concerts* (Verve)
- 14 Thelonious Monk, *Live At The "It" Club* (Columbia)
- 13 Charlie Parker, *Complete Live* (Savoy)
- 12 Charles Mingus, *The Clown* (Rhino)
- 11 Thelonious Monk, *Monk Alone—The Complete Solo Studio Recordings* (Columbia/Legacy)

Reissue: fan's fantasia and industry cash-cow. Like the ghost at a seance, dead music is contacted, awakened, made to speak again.

Of course, not all the reissues currently flooding shops are in fact featuring dead music. Blue Note's been gathering already available records into complete sessions boxes, like the Herbie Hancock *Complete Blue Note Sixties Sessions*; these usually augment records that are already purchasable with a few alternate takes thrown in for good measure. And there's the John Coltrane Impulse! box—another contraption designed as an X-mas present for the absolute completist. Or consider this year's big winner, the Miles Davis *Complete Bitches Brew Sessions*. Unlike many of the long out-of-print obscurities that are being revived, such as the Hank Mobley Mosaic box that made the list this year, the fabulously popular *Bitches Brew* tracks have been consistently available since not long after the advent of CD.

The trick, in lieu of reissuing records that have wholly fallen into the vortex of material culture history, seems to be one of rebundling and repackaging ... and trying to sell someone the same thing twice. How frustrating, then, for Miles Davis aficionados who have already shelled out for the revolutionary, controversial basic *Bitches Brew* package in its pedestrian two-disc form, only to find out about this lavish 4-CD package, beautifully illustrated with a 150-page hardbound book crammed with interesting information about the sessions, plus nine previously unissued tracks and several additional tracks that were issued over the years on *Circle In The Round*, *Big Fun* and *Live/Evil*. No wonder there's sometimes cynicism amongst record consumers—how many of us have bought what we thought was a CD we didn't own, gotten home and discovered that it's just the same music in different clothes?

What's perhaps special and appealing about the *Bitches Brew* box is that it offers something substantive and new. Mark Wilder and Rob Schwartz's remix very audibly enhances the original version without messing with the music. Moreover, in its unreleased tracks the package gathers some of the working materials—long, jam-oriented cuts that were clearly designed to be edited and montaged together—to give a peek behind the curtain at a bit of Miles' artistic process. These tracks are the stuff of Miles mythology. But it should be kept in mind that this was raw material, part of a working method of letting the tape run and choosing juicy sections after the fact. A good part of the art is in the selecting and the cutting. Reissue producer Bob Belden's superb splice-by-splice analysis of the editing on "Pharaoh's Dance" and "Bitches Brew" deserves particular mention for the detail and texture it adds to our understanding of Miles' post-production.

Nonetheless, there are still complaints to be lodged. Critic Art Lange made an astute suggestion that the division of these sessions from the recordings made a month later—some of which became *Jack Johnson*—was arbitrary and that that material should have been included to give a really full picture of what was going on in the *Bitches Brew* period. Furthermore, it would be nice to have a clear indication of what the *original album* actually was, in plain sight. (For that, you could always pick up the straight remixed version of *Bitches Brew*, which just arrived with my morning mail.) First, it's confusing for any newcomer interested in what music people have been discussing all these years. Second, there is an art of production that is destroyed when records are reduced to simple sessions. Simple rule of thumb: not all record buyers are discographers.

—John Corbett

ACOUSTIC BASSIST OF THE YEAR

dave holland

during the past three decades, chances are that in any given year Dave Holland played on some of the most creative, interesting or flat-out thrilling albums.

The last 12 months were no different. His fat-toned, flexible bass work anchored Joe Lovano's tour de force *Trio Fascination* (Blue Note) and Gary Burton's all-star get-together *Like Minds* (Concord Jazz). But it was his own album, the probing, beautifully textured *Points Of View* (ECM), and his quintet's subsequent touring, that helped bump Holland into first place as Acoustic Bassist of the Year.

"The thing that's closest to my heart is the quintet, and the fact we were able to work with continuity through the year is very satisfying," says Holland, expressing his habitually collective, share-the-credit sensibility. "We were happy to see how well *Points Of View* was received. It gives us the extra little push and makes the audiences even more interested in what we're doing."

Holland's open-ended approach to bandleading puts a premium on group interaction. As a result, the quintet—which includes trombonist Robin Eubanks, vibraphonist Steve Nelson, drummer Billy Kilson and Chris Potter on saxophones (he replaced Steve Wilson, who plays on the album)—has cultivated a charged communal empathy. While Holland's elliptical compositions form the base of the band's repertoire, his musical vision is far-ranging and polyglot.

"When I'm writing a composition in my studio, I view it very much as a starting point rather than an ending point," Holland says. "It's not a group where every 'i' is dotted or 't' is crossed in terms of the way the musicians should interpret the music. I like the model that Duke



Acoustic Bass

- 221 **Dave Holland**
- 124 Charlie Haden
- 106 Ray Brown
- 100 Christian McBride
- 51 Ron Carter
- 50 George Mraz
- 45 Gary Peacock
- 41 Ray Drummond
- 21 William Parker
- 21 Buster Williams
- 19 Reggie Workman
- 17 John Patitucci
- 13 Malachi Favors

“Dave is one of the most beautiful improvisers in jazz and has been an inspiration for me all my life.” —Joe Lovano

Ellington presents, where he has music tailored to the individual concept and direction of the musicians, and the music is really written for particular characters and personalities.”

Last year's *Thimar* (ECM) with Tunisian oud master Anouar Brahem and British reed player John Surman is a perfect example of how Holland responds to his collaborators' personalities. Full of mysterious, keening, minor key melodies, the session is an improvisation-laced, cross-cultural exchange, neither world music nor jazz.

“Anouar's a very sensitive and emotional musician,” Holland says, “with very direct emotional contact to the audience and the musicians he plays with.”

Holland's ability to bring so much of himself to other musicians' projects is one reason he's such a highly valued studio presence. Lovano cites his 1991 album *From The Soul* with Holland as a

turning point in his artistic development. The saxophonist conceived the music for 1998's *Trio Fascination* with the bassist and Elvin Jones in mind.

“Dave is one of the most beautiful improvisers in jazz and has been an inspiration for me all my life,” Lovano said. “I've heard him play solo concerts, with Anthony Braxton, Sam Rivers and with his own groups. I've had a chance to play with him a couple of times within his music, which is so beautiful and challenging and free. No matter what style or context he puts himself in, whether with Miles or McLaughlin or whatever, it's all about the music.”

It was Miles, of course, with his uncanny ability to spot talent, who first brought Holland to the attention of the jazz world when he hired him in 1968. And with Columbia's release last year of *The Complete Bitches Brew Sessions*, Holland's central role in the trumpeter's seminal 1970

fusion album has come into clearer focus.

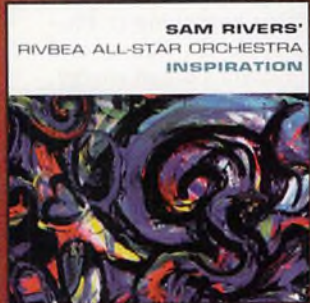
“When the band was off the road, we'd often get a call at fairly short notice that we were going to go into the studio,” Holland recalls of the Davis quintet. “Sometimes we wouldn't rehearse at all. Sometimes we'd rehearse at Miles' house, and then when we went to the studio we'd find that we were doing something else. It often wasn't clear whether we were rehearsing a piece or recording it, and most of the time we were doing both. So it was a very spontaneous thing, being formed as it was being done. Those sessions with Miles were very educational for me in terms of seeing how he worked with the musicians and the music.”

The lessons Holland absorbed with Davis continue to shape his music. At 52, he's still a work in progress, seeking and achieving fresh points of view.

—Andrew Gilbert

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“...one of the unique contemporary voices on his instrument.”
LA TIMES

Features Coleman's group, Five Elements, and special guests including Ralph Alessi, Ravi Coltrane, Stefon Harris, Jason Moran and Regg Washington.

STEVE COLEMAN
THE SONIC LANGUAGE OF MYTH:
Believing, Learning, Knowing



RCA VICTOR

ANDY SUMMERS
GREEN CHIMNEYS:

The Music of Thelonious Monk
Guitar superstar Andy Summers makes a powerful voyage back to his jazz roots in a charismatic tribute to Thelonious Monk. Featuring collaborators including Dave Carpenter, Peter Erskine, Joey DeFrancesco, Hank Roberts and Sting, Summers' inventive arrangements cast new light on Monk's masterful originals.



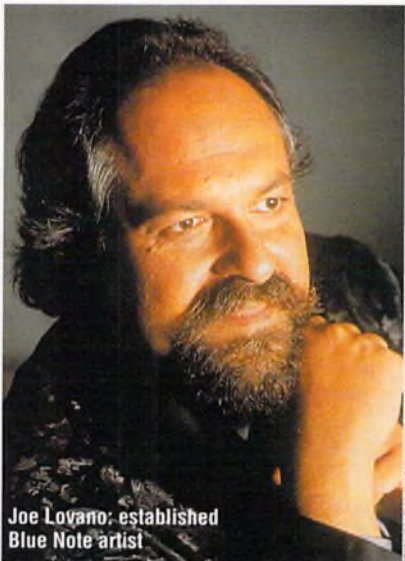
RECORD LABEL OF THE YEAR

blue note records



Bruce Lundvall: working from a moral imperative

LEIF ERICSON



Joe Lovano: established Blue Note artist

STEPHEN VIGORELLI



Don Byron: a recent signee

BRUCE WELZ

Blue Note Records' Jazz Label of the Year victory is a good sign for music, and not just jazz. Wrestling the title from the ever-estimable Verve Records, keeper of the honor since 1993, Blue Note finishes the '90s like they started them, when they were Label of the Year from 1990-'92.

The good news for music in Blue Note's win centers around two things: the weight of the label's glorious history (celebrating 60 years in 1999) and the tremendous leadership of music lovers creating a home for their artists. In particular, Blue Note President Bruce Lundvall has created an atmosphere that runs counter to today's empty suits/bottom-line creepiness. Inside and outside jazz, the wave of the future seems to be one of cost analysis before musical analysis. For Blue Note, however, the guys at the top of the corporate structure at Capitol-EMI (Blue Note's parent company) have learned to leave well enough alone.

"We have been very fortunate," Lundvall says. "Ever since the label was reactivated in 1985 [see "Riffs" Jan. '99], top management has supported what we do. If we kept the integrity and also made a profit, they were supportive."

What about the revolving-door syndrome of artists being dropped if they don't sell enough? "We have never operated at a loss," Lundvall starts up. "My feeling has been all along that individual artists should stay with the label as long as the label is making a profit. We are interested in making important records, with quality that lasts."

For clarinetist Don Byron, the reason he recently signed to Blue Note is simple. "I think the main reason I came to Blue Note is because Bruce is there," Byron states matter-of-factly. "He really is the kind of record executive, like John Hammond and Ahmet Ertegun were, who works from a moral imperative. They are fantastic people, interested in finding out about the music. They love the music, are in awe of the people who make the music. The other cats I know about are more into themselves; nothing new is going to come from people like that.

"You have to believe you have some rope to be creative," Byron continues. "Every once in a while, I have to make a record like [the controversial] *Nu Blaxploitation*. At Blue Note, artists are nurtured to do whatever they want to do. It is really interesting, not like at other labels. Most jazz labels, they have to have some-

thing super successful to subsidize everything else. If Blue Note's idea of doing that is Cassandra Wilson, I can listen to those records, because I like what she's doing!"

But without a significant catalog, the world's greatest label head would be hard-pressed to win any awards. This past year alone has seen Blue Note launch ambitious reissue campaigns that are the envy of the industry. Says saxophonist Joe Lovano: "For the past 60 years, Blue Note Records has been leading and setting the pace and giving us so many masters, people like Horace Silver, Lee Morgan and Dexter Gordon. Blue Note, likewise, has given me the opportunity to reach out to a lot of folks, and to create music that I believe is representative of my life.

"As for Bruce," Lovano adds, "he has created an environment of trust and confidence."

Echoing Lovano's thoughts about the strength of Blue Note's history is Tom Evered, the label's vice president of marketing. "This win for Blue Note is a validation of the a&r direction the label has taken all along, a validation to let the artists make the records they want to make. [Blue Note co-founder] Alfred Lion could have directed Herbie Hancock to do a Broadway album when he first signed to Blue Note in the '60s, but he didn't. He let Herbie be Herbie. There is a tradition of not dictating to the artists. It's easy to come up with concepts."

Maybe Byron says it best, when he exclaims, "Everything happening at Blue Note is correct. People dig Bruce, and Bruce digs music. He still has that energy, where you can talk about music—and after all these years of being in the record business."

Lundvall's gospel for Blue Note is nothing short of an antidote to the malaise infecting today's record business. "We at Blue Note aren't dealing with a bunch of suits. Artists always lead the public. That's why you don't sit down and tell an artist what they should do. Are we interested in marketing confections? No. Records that last? Yes."

—John Ephland

Record Label

226	Blue Note
198	Verve
66	Mosaic
39	Delmark
37	ECM
37	Concord
33	32 Jazz
19	Okkadisk
18	Criss Cross
18	Impulse!
18	MAMA
17	Black Saint/Soul Note
15	Tzadik
15	Arbors Jazz
14	Winter & Winter

BEYOND GROUPS OF THE YEAR

jerrygonzalez fort apache band



When trumpeter/percussionist Jerry Gonzalez was a Bronx teenager, he had already made a name for himself. He also anonymously advocated for the music he played. Walls were his medium and “Latin jazz” was his graffiti tag. Judging from this year’s poll results, the critical community shares the assertion that Gonzalez has held for a long time.

With Gonzalez’s Fort Apache Band in a tie for first with Cubanismo!—and with the Afro-Cuban All Stars and Ray Barretto’s New World Spirit in the running—Down Beat’s critics have given the poll’s Beyond Group category a distinct Latin jazz twist.

Ever since Jelly Roll Morton’s self-described “Spanish tinge,” Latin rhythms and song forms have been an essential, though at times understated, part of jazz. John Storm Roberts, who has written two informative books on the subject, *The Latin Tinge* and *Latin Jazz*, says that

Beyond Group

- 30 Cubanismo!
- 30 Jerry Gonzalez
Fort Apache Band
- 28 Kronos Quartet
- 20 Los Lobos
- 16 Latin Playboys
- 15 Turtle Island
String Quartet
- 15 Liquid Soul
- 13 The Chieftains
- 11 Afro Cuban All-Stars
- 10 Ray Barretto’s
New World Spirit

cubanismo!



“Jazz and rock critics can rarely dance,
and salsa is understood through the feet and body
as well as the head and heart.”

—John Storm Roberts

a general fascination with distinctively Latin music comes in cycles.

"Latin music becomes hip every 20 years or so and has since the beginning of the century or earlier," Roberts says. "Between whiles it becomes whatever is the contemporary version of square, while continuing to be influential. I think the reason is that each generation tends to despise its parents' loves and rediscover its grandparents'."

Jerry Gonzalez, his bassist brother Andy, and trumpeter Jesús Alemañy of Cubanismo! were always concerned with preserving and innovating the music of previous generations. Fashion followed them.

In the early '70s, both Gonzalez brothers had worked with several renowned bandleaders. Dizzy Gillespie, Eddie Palmieri, Ray Barretto and Tony Williams were just a few of the musicians who recruited them for their units. At this time, the brothers also began seeking out recordings of older Afro-Cuban and Puerto Rican music and formed Grupo Folklórico to present what they heard.

"That was a fun time, we were all learning," Jerry Gonzalez says. "There are records that were done in the '40s that are just as fresh today, the Arsenio Rodriguez recordings. We were trying to retain that traditional thing and at the same time bring in new harmonic developments. The old cats and younger cats were combining with some new energy. It just fell into place."

"The Nuyorican Village in the Lower East Side of Manhattan was the home of the Latino cultural renaissance of the 1970s," Andy Gonzalez says. "We were in the thick of it, and that's where the things that eventually became the Fort Apache Band started."

Years later, in a nation that was kept isolated from that movement, veteran Cuban trumpeter Alemañy had a similar idea for his group, Cubanismo! They would reinterpret venerated son montuno and changüü beats. His concept was initially met with some resistance.

"I remember when we did the first recording, the younger musicians were thinking, 'It's crazy to do this music right now at the end of the century,'" Alemañy says. "But that was the idea we had for a long time: to create a band that had the possibility to play all of those rhythms. And we adapted the band to these different styles, like a son montuno with more trumpets. Now we have more vocalists. [Singer] Rolo Martinez is combined with a new generation of singers who give us a more contemporary sound."

Both groups have also brought Latin sounds to a wide audience through constant touring. On a recent Midwestern trip, Andy Gonzalez says the Fort Apache Band played to enthusiastic crowds in such towns as Sheboygan, Wis. Cubanismo! bridged a particularly wide gap last spring when the band played in Baltimore's Camden Yards following a historic game between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national baseball team. Alemañy says that the anti-Castro demonstrators who protested against the game sneaked in afterwards to catch his band's set.

"At the end of the day, everyone was mixed," Alemañy remembers. "It was a big party."

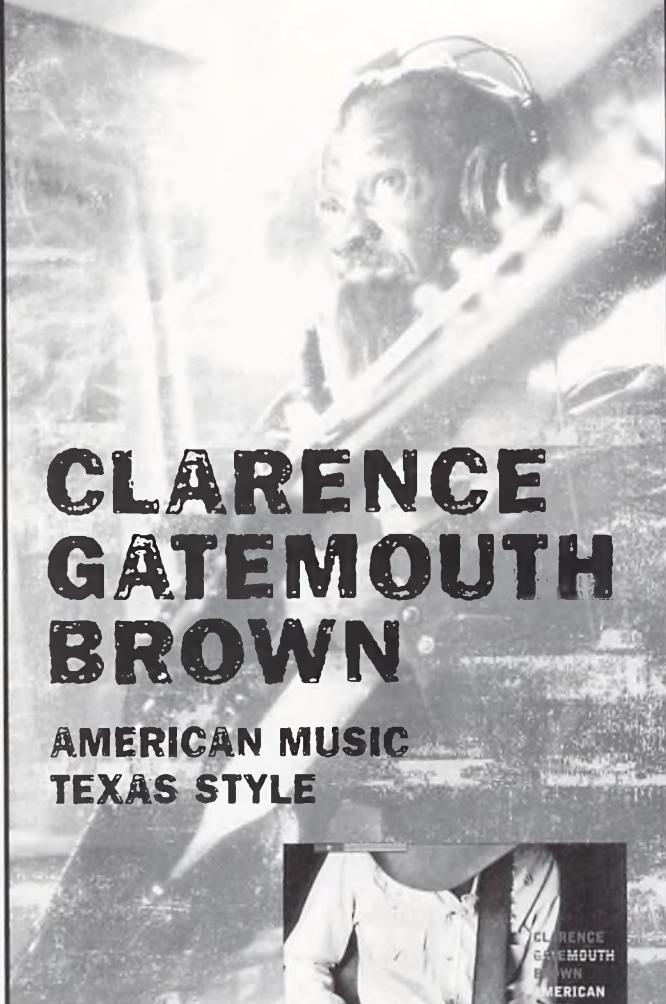
Despite these inroads, an unfortunate possibility is that the poll's Beyond Group category could wind up as a de facto Latin barrio. Jerry Gonzalez says that some critics are "stuck in that image of Latin jazz as that Desi Arnaz shit." Perhaps, but John Storm Roberts' speculation can be more easily observed:

"Jazz and rock critics can rarely dance, and salsa is understood through the feet and body as well as the head and heart."

It's only a matter of time before such infectious beats and tireless musicians win over even this usually stoic and insular group.

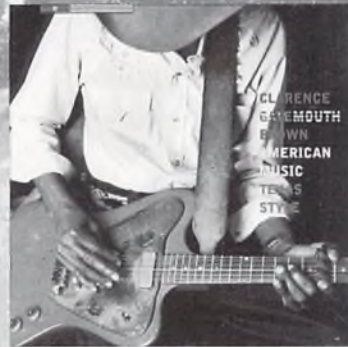
—Aaron Cohen

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THE WRONG WAY...
AND THE "GATE" WAY...**



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TALENTS DESERVING WIDER RECOGNITION

Alto Saxophone

TDWR

- 55 Greg Osby
- 53 Antonio Hart
- 41 Steve Coleman
- 39 Steve Wilson
- 35 Gary Bartz
- 34 Donald Harrison
- 30 Sonny Simmons
- 26 Vincent Herring
- 22 Charles McPherson
- 21 Jesse Davis
- 20 Sherman Irby
- 15 Kenny Garrett
- 13 John Zorn
- 11 John Gordon

Greg Osby looks at his TDWR victory in the alto saxophone category as a signal that perhaps jazz has reached the “threshold of the end of the young lions emulative movement.” Reached by phone in a Wiesbaden, Germany, hotel while on tour, the no-nonsense 38-year-old Osby initially expresses an ambivalence to the award, noting, “I went from no mention at all in the poll to this. It’s as if all my previous efforts have gone unheralded. I’m hardly a new jack. On the other hand, some of the greatest cats in the history of the music have been poll winners.”

While he was involved in several ambitious projects over the past year—including releasing his *Zero* album, co-producing vibraphonist Stefon Harris’ sophomore outing *Little Black Action Figure* and forming the Blue Note all-star touring band New Directions—Osby received the loudest plaudits for his superb CD *Banned In New York*, a “stylized lo-fi” recording capturing his acoustic quartet playing a gig at Sweet Basil in New York City. Even though he covers classic material by Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker and Sonny Rollins, Osby’s well-honed band intuitively charges into exciting new takes, changing forms on the fly thanks to the leader’s cueing system.

Once again, Osby bristles at the recognition. “So here I am being acknowledged for

recording a set of bebop tunes. Now that’s a slap.” He pauses and then reconsiders: “Well, maybe doing the pied piper thing is the way to go. Lead everyone over familiar ground, then take that sharp left.”

Osby has made a career of stretching jazz listeners’ tolerance of unfamiliar territory, seeking to explore his “personalized navigational methods of composition” rather than conform to “regurgitating the ideals.” Earlier this decade he successfully experimented with fusing jazz and hip hop, “capturing the street pulse” like his heroes John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Duke Ellington and Charles Mingus. After that hip-hop groove ran its course, he returned to the acoustic fold, where he continued to dare to be different.

“When that whole young lions thing was fashionable, I wholeheartedly rejected it,” Osby says. “To me it represented a mindset that was the dawning of the anti-jazz. The way I see jazz is that it’s progressive, that it’s fed from a variety of sources, not something that’s fixated on living up to other people’s expectations. I see a lot of musicians from my generation who had a lot of potential cut off from advancing.”

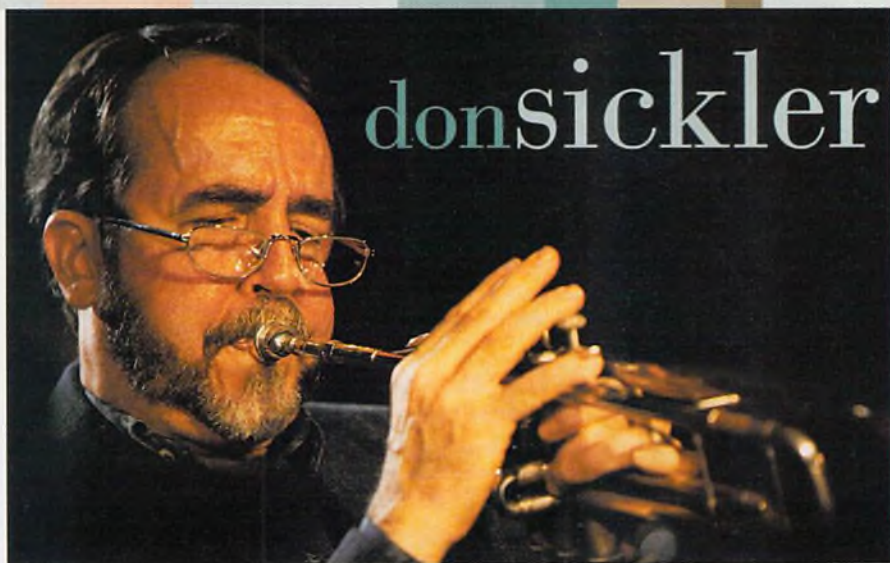
That’s why Osby has assumed what he calls a “lightweight” mentoring role with such young jazz artists as pianist Jason Moran and vibes player Stefon Harris, who were in New Directions. “These guys are all ears and are ready to give the music a different thrust,” he says. “They’re not resting. They’re daring to experiment.”

Osby’s on a roll. In addition to a new album with his quartet coming out in the fall, a new band called Renegade Way with Steve Coleman and Ravi Coltrane tours this fall, and he’s also working on what he calls his “generational misfits” recording due next spring that features Moran, drummer Terri Lyne Carrington, saxophonist Gary Thomas and bassist Scott Colley meeting up with guitarist Jim Hall and pianist Andrew Hill.

Osby has also taken on a leadership role in pushing for more collaborative performances at Blue Note. In addition to New Directions, which recently recorded its debut disc after a triumphant national tour largely in front of non-jazz audiences, Osby also worked with Joe Lovano on their recently released joint project *Friendly Fire*. “I’d like to work more with other artists on the label, to talk shop and play and thereby give Blue Note a reflective sound similar to what was going on here in the ‘60s, when artists collaborated all the time.”

—Dan Ouellette





Like the best cinematographers, the best arrangers call little attention to themselves in supporting and facilitating an artistic vision. So it makes a certain amount of sense that nine years after being voted the arranger most deserving of wider recognition, Don Sickler has been so recognized in the Critics Poll once again.

It's not that the 55-year-old Sickler has escaped notice. Since the late '70s, when Philly Joe Jones tabbed him to play trumpet in Dameronia, a band devoted to the compositions of Tadd Dameron, the Spokane, Wash., native has left his signature on countless acclaimed projects. He is the go-to guy when it comes to transcribing and arranging—and, through his own firm, publishing—the works of Thelonious Monk and underappreciated '50s composers such as Kenny Dorham, Hank Mobley and Elmo Hope.

Through his membership in the working quintet of drummer Thelonious Monk Jr., he has raised his profile to an all-time high. But it is behind the scenes that Sickler has made his greatest contribution. As much as its glittery all-star cast, his arrangements boosted *Monk On Monk*, voted Jazz Album of the Year in last year's Readers Poll. And his guiding light has shown young Monk the way to succeed in jazz following his stint as an r&b artist.

Sickler, who formed his publishing company, Second Floor Music, in 1979, credits his status as a "late bloomer" to the years he spent in the corporate world. For all of his copyright expertise and experience, there is little he can do to protect himself and other arrangers. "Arrangers have no rights," he says, citing Wild Bill Davis' introduction to "April In Paris." "A lot of people took it and stamped it on other arrangements. Davis asked me whether they could do that without paying for it. The answer was yes."

Sickler discovered his propensity for transcribing when he was young and hungry for material. "It was the only way to

get transcriptions," he says. He never formally studied arranging, "learning on the job writing record dates." And of course from listening to records. Though he bows to the Duke in this Ellingtennial year, it was the Count who "blew me away."

Basieite Ernie Wilkins is high on his list of favorite arrangers, along with Bill Holman (this year's top Arranger in the Critics Poll), Bob Florence, Don Sebesky, Al Cohn, Chico O'Farrill and Melba Liston.

Sickler has drawn considerable acclaim for his own albums, *The Music Of Kenny Dorham* and *Night Watch*, plus two self-titled recordings by Superblue, a hard-bopping all-star septet of which he was leader. But playing trumpet, "which comes fairly easily to me," doesn't mean as much to him as "orchestrating great works and making them playable"—and, through his Web site, www.secondfloormusic.com, making them available to musicians.

Claiming some 200 arrangements, he consistently captures the grit and sparkle of hard-bop in its ascendancy while rooting it in the present with its freshness and soulful clarity. He has a full slate of projects lined up, including tributes to Hank Mobley and Gigi Gryce. But Monk, whose compositions the pianist's widow, Nellie, entrusted him with renewing, will forever be his prime inspiration.

"Getting inside Monk, transcribing his piano parts and orchestrating them is a real labor of love," he says. "It's always full of surprises. When I work on Monk, I want to rip the phones out and lock myself away for weeks at a time. The music is very powerful. It just takes over. It becomes such an obsession, I can't sleep."

—Lloyd Sachs

Arranger

TOWR

- 37 Don Sickler
- 34 Bob Florence
- 30 Maria Schneider
- 26 Anthony Wilson
- 23 Slide Hampton
- 20 Bob Belden
- 17 John Clayton
- 16 Jim McNeely
- 15 Melba Liston
- 12 Bill Kirchner
- 11 John Fedchock
- 10 Bob Mintzer
- 10 Jimmy Heath
- 10 Carla Bley

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banjo renegade Bela Fleck sees his band, the Flecktones, as a bridge between different kinds of musics. "We might open a jazz listener up to certain bluegrass musicians," he says. "Or, conversely, we'll be the only jazz group at a bluegrass festival, and they'll go, 'I actually like this jazz stuff.'"

The Flecktones' 10-year partnership has yielded six albums, including the recent *Left Of Cool* (Warner Bros.), which bagged a Grammy in the Jazz Composition category for "Almost 12."

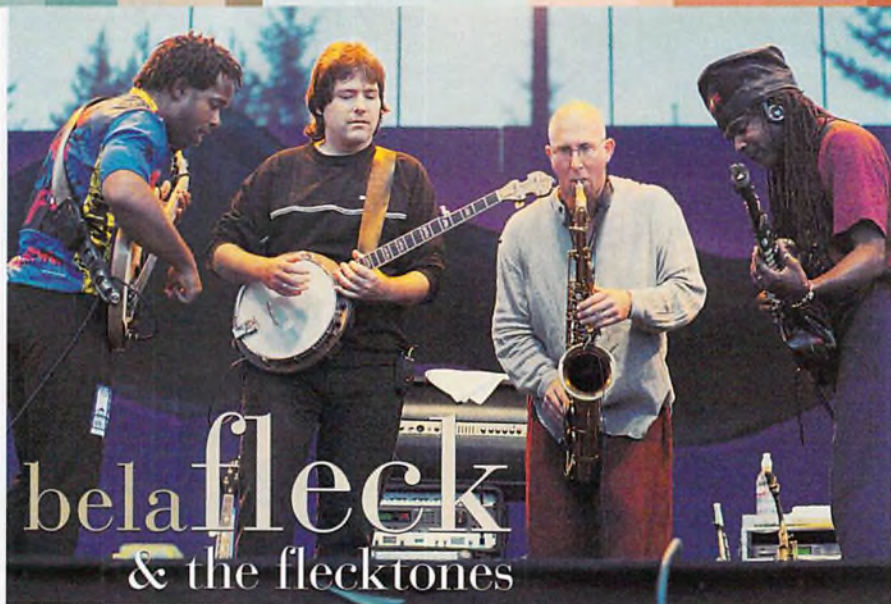
Playing with his fellow Flecktones has become "kind of an intuitive thing,"

according to drummer Future Man. "I've been playing with Vic since he was two-and-a-half," he says of his bass-playing brother, Victor Wooten (winner of the Electric Bassist TDWR honor for the second straight year). "That's been a big help, because when I play, the 'one' is

Electric Jazz Group

TDWR

- 55 **Bela Fleck & The Flecktones**
- 48 Steve Coleman & Five Elements
- 45 Medeski Martin & Wood
- 37 Charlie Hunter
- 20 Yellowjackets
- 20 Zawinul Syndicate
- 17 Astral Project
- 14 Bill Frisell
- 13 NRG Ensemble
- 13 Metalwood
- 11 Marcus Miller
- 11 Wayne Horvitz



implied a lot. Vic will usually know where the 'one' is supposed to be. So it gives you a chance to try different things."

The Flecktones plan to play about 150 dates this year, down from their usual 200-plus, to allow each member a bit more time on projects away from the band. "Now everybody has that freedom because the band is established," Fleck says. "It doesn't take away, it only adds."

Fleck has a new recording out with a group of "all-star bluegrass free thinkers," called *Tales From The Acoustic Planet*,

Volume Two: The Bluegrass Sessions. Wooten has a new double CD titled *Yin-Yang* (Compass). Future Man has brought some acoustic drums onstage to augment his Synthaxe Drumitar, and is increasingly utilizing his voice in the group. Saxman Jeff Coffin has become an important part of the group in his two years aboard.

"You can see that people are taking notice of the experiment," smiles Future Man. "The experiment continues."

—Robin Tolleson

The ascending Russell Malone brings equal parts dexterity and delight to music-making. You hear it on his most recent CD, the delicious *Sweet Georgia Peach* (Impulse!), in his easeful playing; caught live, his face lights up like a roadmap to Joyland. Whether it's bending some blistering blue chords at a recent over-the-top organ summit at Tri-C JazzFest, or complementing vocalist/pianist Diana Krall like sweet strawberry jam atop a warm biscuit, Malone always lends great measures of Georgia-bred Southern soul to whatever bandstand is fortunate enough to boast his skills.

Informed of his Critics Poll selection,

wise man Malone responded: "I'm very flattered. It always makes a person feel good when they're acknowledged; it's a wonderful feeling. At the same time, I'm also realistic about it because somebody once told me, 'The higher you fly, the more your behind is exposed.'"

Guitar

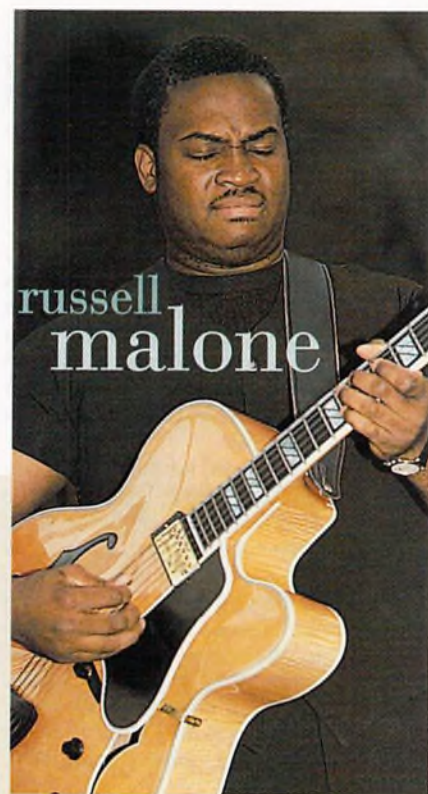
TDWR

- 63 **Russell Malone**
- 52 Charlie Hunter
- 43 Joe Morris
- 39 Mark Elf
- 29 Peter Leitch
- 28 Steve Masakowski
- 28 Kurt Rosenwinkel
- 28 Anthony Wilson
- 25 Howard Alden
- 24 Peter Bernstein
- 20 Jeff Parker
- 20 Derek Bailey
- 18 Mark Whitfield
- 18 Ben Monder
- 13 Bill Frisell
- 12 Ron Affit

The 35-year-old Malone first came to widespread attention on records and tours with Harry Connick Jr., to whose performances he lent a swing quotient unmistakably blue in its conception.

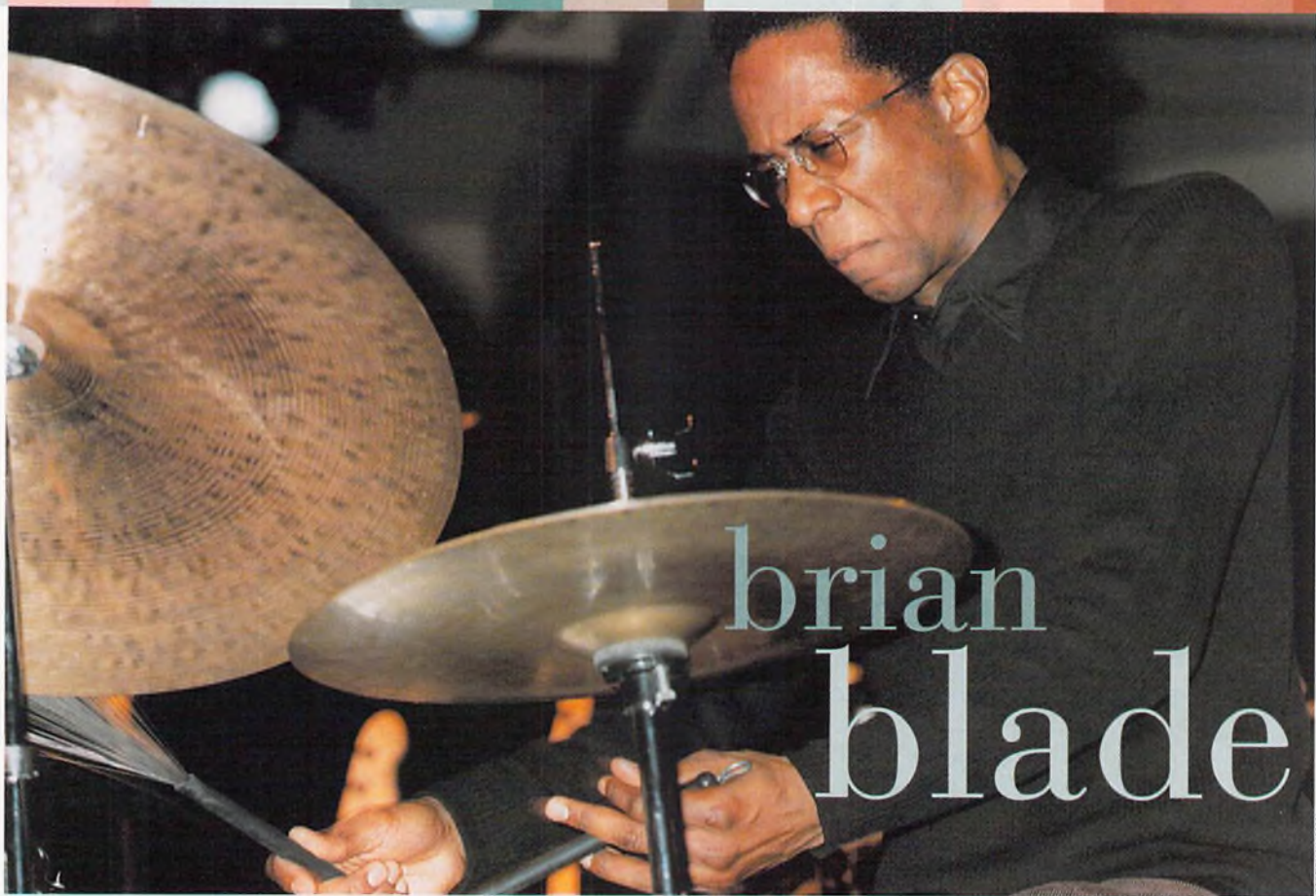
Following his stints with Connick, organ master blaster Jimmy Smith and two record dates for Columbia, Malone's most precipitous hook-up has been with Krall. The two have developed a near telepathic relationship. "It's good working with a singer who can sing," says the unabashed lover of singers who has also worked extensively with Freddy Cole, "and Diana is a musician, so it makes it easy; singing good songs and trusting in each other. My favorite part of the show is when we do duets, just voice and guitar."

This summer Malone took a hiatus from Krall's employ to play some dates with a trio including bassist Christian McBride under the leadership of pianist Benny Green. His summer itinerary also includes dates with his current working band: Richie Goods on bass, Byron Landham on drums and Anthony Wonsey on piano, the same rhythm section that recorded his forthcoming date for Verve. "I wrote some new material, and I did some arrangements of some popular tunes that are a bit left of center. I did the theme from *The Odd Couple* and I did a Stevie Wonder tune called 'You



Will Know,'" he enthused, previewing the follow-up date to last year's *Sweet Georgia Peach*.

—Willard Jenkins



brian blade

brian Blade calls his band Fellowship, a concept that's at the heart of the group's self-titled 1998 debut. "This is a turbulent world," says the softspoken 28-year-old drummer. "So much is happening, and you wonder where your place is in it. Let's get over bloodlines and boundary lines and see where we can meet. Hopefully, the music is a manifestation of that idealism."

Blade is anything but soft-spoken on the drums on recent fiery releases by Joshua Redman and Kenny Garrett. But whether it's blistering jazz, the lush spaces on his band's Blue Note debut or his giving ensemble work with Joni Mitchell, a certain spirit guides Blade's playing. Great hands aside, he is a top-notch listener. "As a drummer, you sort of surrender to the situation. It's trying to be a part of the whole and make the right decisions at the right times."

Fellowship features pianist Jon Cowherd, bassist Chris Thomas, horn men Melvin Butler and Myron Walden, guitarist Jeff Parker and Dave Easley on pedal steel. There's a strong sense of "place" in the music on the group's CD—you can "hear" the South of Blade's Louisiana upbringing through much of it. "A landscape is depicted in a song, in a harmonic motion or a melody," Blade affirms. "It can be different for every person. But for me, the point of origin is quite important. You try to stay somewhat true to that. No matter where the piece of music may go in the future, no matter how much you play it, there definitely has to be a genesis."

Blade was heard in '98 on Mitchell's *Taming The Tiger* album, and is touring with Seal for

most of '99, never slowing down long enough to get pigeon-holed. "Boundary lines, if they were ever drawn, were definitely just fingers in the sand," he explains, "and quickly got blown over. They never existed for me. I have to give thanks to the folks I grew up around in Shreveport, down in New Orleans. Either you touch someone through your music or you don't, so it becomes irrelevant what the banner is flying above it."

Blade has been a Mitchell fan since he was 16. "To this day, her music is revealing things to me," he says. "I'm drawn to it on many different levels, spiritually, emotionally, just as a listener and lover of music. It's like a dance. She opens the door, she lets you in on it like, 'Be my guest.' I never feel any pressure. She trusts my instincts to fill in the steps for a while, and I try to do my best. It's a joy. I'm thankful to her, and to anyone that I play with, that they give me this *carte blanche* and trust me to make the music live, to be a part of it."

With Seal, Blade is joined by guitarist Michael Landau, Tony Levin on bass, and keyboardist and musical director David Sancious. "Seal's music has a lot of depth, subtlety and intensity. We get to the sound that's on his recording, but it's also a live situation so there's all this beautiful room for error and the exchange of the group and the audience—that whole circular completion. I'm glad that there aren't any sequencers, not that I'm opposed to playing with that sort of thing, but this way there's that bit of the unknown every night. I'm just trying to keep it feeling good, make the arrangements breathe."

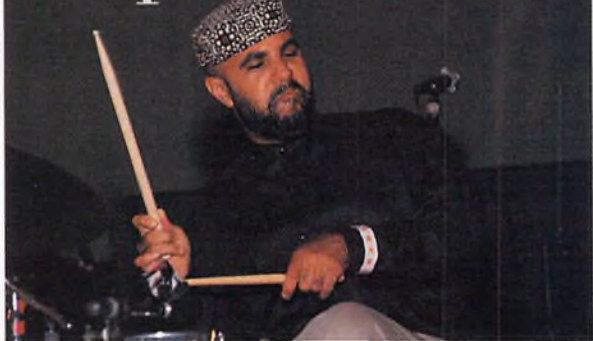
—Robin Tolleson

Drums

TDWR

- 52 **Brian Blade**
- 51 Lewis Nash
- 50 Leon Parker
- 40 Bill Stewart
- 36 Jeff "Tain" Watts
- 35 Matt Wilson
- 28 Jim Black
- 25 Joey Baron
- 25 Susie Ibarra
- 23 Billy Hart
- 23 Jeff Hamilton
- 21 Jason Marsalis
- 20 Han Bennink
- 18 Hamid Drake
- 17 Joe Chambers
- 16 Billy Kilson
- 16 Gerry Hemingway
- 15 Ralph Peterson
- 10 Winard Harper

leonparker



PHOTOGRAPH

Leon Parker is a blur, a vibrant slash of movement who challenges you to pin him down musically—and geographically. Somewhere en route to a gig in Boston from New York, he consents to an interview via cell phone.

"I'll be doing a solo performance and playing my drums, but mainly I'll be doing my vocal/body/rhythm technique, including audience participation," he explains of his one-man shows, where his body becomes a living drum.

Using himself as an instrument is consistent with Parker's penchant for total independence, free even from the tools of his trade. As in his music, he seems intent on paring down to the basic essentials, managing his affairs in every sense of the word. He books his own gigs,

runs his own workshops, and now that he is no longer "encumbered" by Sony/Columbia, hopes to produce his own recordings someday.

With Columbia, Parker released three albums. His debut *Above And*

Below introduced the world to his spare but effective style. The second one, *Belief*, is Parker's favorite because he believes it best represents his effort to transform and personalize jazz standards. "Also, I felt comfortable with my own compositions," he adds.

But mentioning his former record company makes this percussionist deserving wider recognition a little uncomfortable. "Let's say we made three beautiful artistic statements together that I'm very proud of, and I'm really happy with the way they distribute records. It was a great learning experience, but I'm happy where I am right now."

Right now includes an occasional gig, just enough to keep the bills paid, and more time to deal with his life. One facet of his life is teaching, which he does once a week. "I'm very busy developing this vocal/body/rhythm technique and my ensemble," he says. "And I'm interested in working with artists from different disciplines, especially dance, as well as expanding my Web site."

Cyberspace has a lot to do with

Parker's newfound feelings of independence. "Having a Web site means I don't have to rely on a big corporation to present me to the world," he explains. "I want to define my image, to control the rate of my own growth and exposure, and a Web site is a good way of advertising and promoting what you do."

Parker is currently updating the site and planning critical linkages with other sites. When he isn't online or minding his children, he's composing or in the studio. "The studio is a place where I get in touch with myself and my music, which is ever-evolving," he says. "It's like a mirror that reflects where I am and where I need to be. Duke Ellington had his band; I've got the studio."
—Herb Boyd

Percussion

TDWR

- 41 Leon Parker
- 36 Jerry Gonzalez
- 33 Marilyn Mazur
- 33 Giovanni Hidalgo
- 29 Kahil El'Zabar
- 26 Ray Barretto
- 22 Don Alias
- 16 Poncho Sanchez
- 17 Mino Cinelu
- 15 Steve Berrios

his sound is both buoyant and ringing, rich and weighty. His linear ideas are often angular and unexpected while being rife with lyricism. His rhythm is hard-driving yet has a floating, ethereal quality.

Larry Goldings, this year's organist deserving wider recognition, deftly mixes complexity and simplicity, making music that is as alluring as it is compelling. He's also one of chief protagonists behind jazz organ's current resurgence.

In the dozen or so years since he toured with Maceo Parker and started playing organ in earnest, Goldings, who is also a fine pianist, has racked up some impressive credits. Besides his three-year stint with the ex-James Brown saxophonist, the Boston-native spent a good deal of 1993-98 touring with John Scofield, and has recorded with both, as well as with Chris Potter, Peter Bernstein, Javon Jackson, Don Braden and, most recently, Michael Brecker.

Goldings the organist has had encouraging results as a recording artist and performer. He's got seven albums under his belt, counting a brand new one for Palmetto, and he's led his trio—guitarist Bernstein and drummer Bill Stewart—at Manhattan's Sweet Basil, Iridium and Smalls and on a tour of the Netherlands and Ireland.

In other words, Goldings, who turns 31

on Aug. 28, is very much on the way up, which is exactly what a TDWR victory represents. "I can't complain," says the man who names Jimmy Smith, Larry Young and Dr. Lonnie Smith as favorites. "I've been recognized by a lot of great artists. Otherwise, I wouldn't get the kind of work I have. But it's nice to hear that the critics feel that way."

Goldings will no doubt get increased notice from *Moonbird* (Palmetto), his first album in three years. Composed of all originals save a tune each by Joni Mitchell and Randy Newman, *Moonbird* features Bernstein and Stewart.

"The album covers a lot of territory within the jazz realm," says Goldings. "Some of the pieces, like 'Woodstock,' have a moody vibe; others are swingers. Also, I'm trying to find some different sounds on the organ, some different textures."

Teaming up with Bernstein and Stewart is always a joy, Goldings says. "Peter and I are both attracted to melody. Even within a complex line, Peter is always lyrical. And Bill is the most inven-



PHOTOGRAPH

larry goldings

tive drummer I've played with. You can't get lazy around those guys."

In addition to his trio work, listen for Goldings this summer with Carla Bley's octet and saxophonist Harry Allen. Or check out his playing on Brecker's latest CD, which also features Pat Metheny and Elvin Jones.
—Zan Stewart

Organ

TDWR

- 68 Larry Goldings
- 67 Barbara Dennerlein
- 50 John Medeski
- 42 Wayne Horvitz
- 38 Dan Wall
- 35 Amina Claudine Myers
- 32 Chris Foreman
- 31 Joey DeFrancesco
- 23 Sam Yahel
- 23 Melvin Rhyne

DOWN BEAT 47TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CRITICS POLL RESULTS 1999

Jazz Artist of the Year

TDWR

- 90 Dave Douglas**
 51 Brad Mehldau
 23 Danilo Perez
 22 Chris Potter
 21 Nicholas Payton
 19 Ken Vandermark
 19 David Sanchez
 19 Cyrus Chestnut
 18 Regina Carter
 16 Roy Hargrove
 15 Cassandra Wilson
 14 Fred Anderson
 13 Uri Caine
 10 Jesus "Chucho" Valdés
 10 Stefan Harris
 10 Greg Osby

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185 Mingus Big Band

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 29 Vanguard Jazz Orchestra
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 20 Bob Mintzer
 14 Clayton/Hamilton
 12 Sun Ra Arkestra
 10 Bob Florence
 10 McCoy Tyner

TDWR

- 39 Either/Orchestra**
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 25 John Fedchock
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 21 Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra
 20 Jason Lindner
 20 Bob Florence
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- Creative Music Orchestra
 13 NDR Big Band
 12 Maria Schneider
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Acoustic Jazz Group

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TDWR

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- 17 Paul Motian Electric Bebop Band
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 11 Headhunters
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 24 Giovanni Bonandrini
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TDWR

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 20 Kazunori Sugiyama
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 13 Matt Douber
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- 31 Dave Douglas
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 13 Benny Golson

TDWR

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 21 Jon Jang
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TDWR

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- 155 Wayne Shorter
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TDWR

- 75 Jane Ira Bloom**
 55 Jane Bunnett
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 50 James Carter
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 25 Branford Marsalis
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 18 Ari Brown
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 10 Dick Oatts

Alto Saxophone

- 149 Phil Woods**
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 100 Lee Konitz
 75 Jackie McLean



Steve Turre



James Carter



Regina Carter



Kurt Elling



Nicholas Payton



Bill Laswell

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- 20 Steve Coleman
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- 10 Steve Wilson

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- 46 Johnny Griffin
- 40 Michael Brecker
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- 22 James Moody
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TDWR

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- 36 Joshua Redman
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TDWR

100 James Carter

- 58 Joe Temperley
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- 17 Alex Harding
- 12 Tim Berne
- 11 Claire Daly
- 10 Patience Higgins

Trombone

205 Steve Turre

- 181 J.J. Johnson
- 112 Ray Anderson
- 73 Frank Lacy
- 36 George Lewis
- 28 Curtis Fuller
- 27 Robin Eubanks
- 24 Wycliffe Gordon
- 24 Roswell Rudd
- 22 Slide Hampton
- 22 Al Grey
- 15 Conrad Herwig
- 14 Carl Fontana
- 14 Bill Watrous
- 13 Dan Barrett

TDWR

82 Conrad Herwig

- 75 Robin Eubanks
- 58 Wycliffe Gordon
- 46 Frank Lacy
- 41 Steve Davis
- 30 Roswell Rudd
- 29 Dan Barrett
- 29 George Lewis
- 29 Craig Harris
- 19 Curtis Fowlkes
- 13 Josh Roseman
- 12 Albert Mangelsdorff
- 12 Ray Anderson

Piano

124 Kenny Barron

- 93 Tommy Flanagan
- 89 Keith Jarrett
- 65 McCoy Tyner
- 63 Cecil Taylor
- 56 Brad Mehldau
- 47 Randy Weston
- 44 Herbie Hancock
- 31 Hank Jones
- 28 Jesus "Chucho" Valdés
- 21 Oscar Peterson
- 20 Gonzalo Rubalcaba
- 20 Danilo Perez
- 17 Fred Hersch
- 15 Chick Corea
- 15 Marcus Roberts
- 14 John Hicks
- 13 Paul Bley

TDWR

82 Brad Mehldau

- 46 Danilo Perez
- 40 Kenny Werner
- 39 Cyrus Chestnut
- 37 Matthew Shipp
- 32 Jesus "Chucho" Valdés
- 30 Jacky Terrasson
- 21 Jessica Williams
- 20 Misha Mengelberg
- 19 Marilyn Crispell
- 19 Ruben González
- 19 D.D. Jackson
- 18 Myra Melford
- 14 Gonzalo Rubalcaba
- 14 Hank Jones
- 11 Geri Allen
- 10 Benny Green
- 10 Kenny Drew Jr.
- 10 Jodie Christian
- 10 Bill Charlap

Organ

179 Jimmy Smith

- 128 Joey DeFrancesco
- 83 Jack McDuff
- 77 Jimmy McGriff
- 68 John Medeski
- 54 Larry Goldings
- 40 Charles Earland
- 38 Dr. Lonnie Smith
- 31 Amina Claudine Myers
- 18 Barbara Dennerlein
- 17 Dan Wall
- 15 Eddie Louiss
- 11 Melvin Rhyne

Electric Keyboard

218 Joe Zawinul

- 111 Herbie Hancock
- 51 Chick Corea
- 44 John Medeski
- 33 Lyle Mays
- 32 Muhai Richard Abrams

- 19 Wayne Horvitz
- 13 Jim Beard

TDWR

55 John Medeski

- 43 Wayne Horvitz
- 39 Django Bates
- 29 John Surman
- 29 Uri Caine
- 25 Lyle Mays
- 25 Adam Holzman
- 19 Gil Goldstein
- 10 Richard Teitelbaum

Guitar

146 Bill Frisell

- 140 Jim Hall

- 137 John Scofield
- 99 Pat Metheny
- 63 Kenny Burrell
- 39 Pat Martino
- 38 Russell Malone
- 32 John McLaughlin
- 32 Howard Alden
- 27 Marc Ribot
- 23 Charlie Hunter
- 23 Derek Bailey
- 16 Mark Whitfield
- 12 John Abercrombie
- 12 Joe Morris
- 10 Bucky Pizzarelli

Acoustic Bass

TDWR

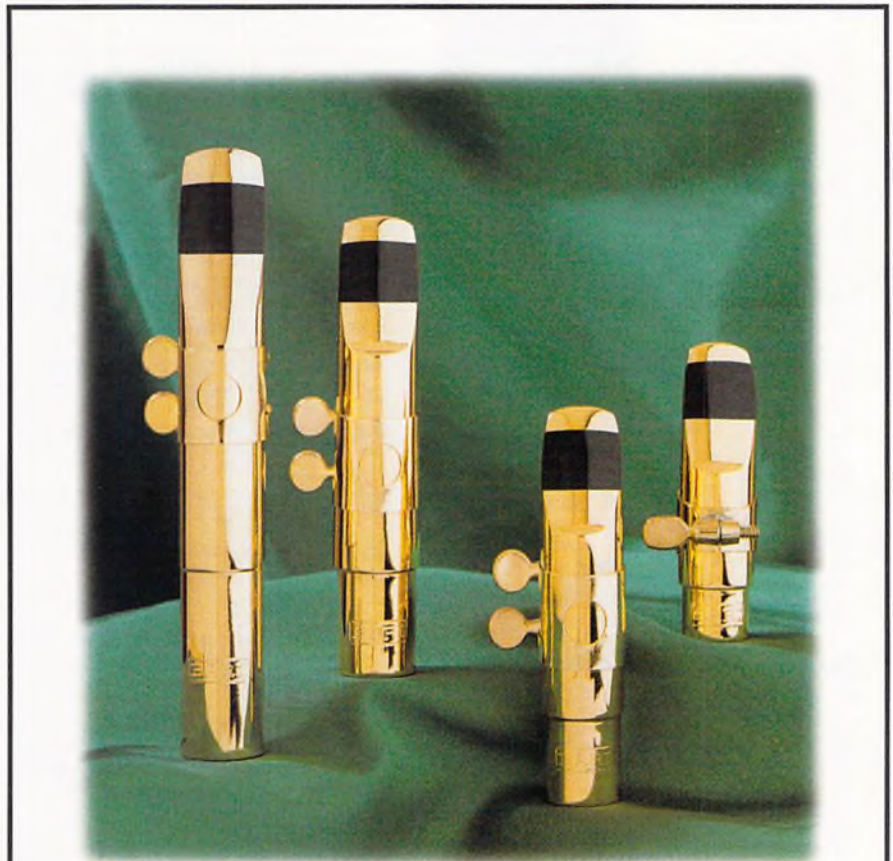
68 Avishai Cohen

- 58 William Parker
- 56 Christian McBride
- 32 Peter Washington
- 30 Larry Grenadier
- 24 Barry Guy
- 20 Drew Gress
- 14 Charnett Moffett
- 13 Scott Colley
- 13 George Mraz
- 12 Anthony Cox
- 12 Malachi Favors
- 11 Ray Drummond

Electric Bass

203 Steve Swallow

- 68 Marcus Miller
- 61 John Patitucci
- 58 Bob Cranshaw



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theCritics

Following is a list of critics who voted in Down Beat's 47th Annual International Critics Poll. A total of 104 critics voted this year, distributing 10 points among up to three choices (no more than five votes per choice) in each of two categories: Established Talent and Talent Deserving Wider Recognition. The participants were:

- 34 Victor Wooten
- 33 Bill Laswell
- 27 Stanley Clarke
- 25 Anthony Jackson
- 13 Eberhard Weber
- 12 Avery Sharpe

TDWR

- 61 Victor Wooten
- 42 Christian McBride
- 28 Charnett Moffett
- 27 Bill Laswell
- 25 John Patitucci
- 22 Eberhard Weber
- 22 James Genus
- 22 Richard Bona
- 18 Andy Gonzalez
- 13 Marcus Miller

Drums

- 181 Elvin Jones
- 140 Roy Haynes
- 108 Billy Higgins
- 104 Jack DeJohnette
- 94 Max Roach
- 35 Lewis Nash
- 26 Idris Muhammad
- 25 Jeff "Tain" Watts
- 19 Andrew Cyrille
- 17 Brian Blade
- 12 Joey Baron
- 10 Billy Hart

Percussion

- 107 Trilok Gurtu
- 87 Tito Puente
- 68 Don Alias
- 53 Poncho Sanchez
- 47 Ray Barretto
- 44 Famoudou Don Moye
- 37 Giovanni Hidalgo
- 30 Leon Parker
- 28 Mino Cinelu
- 25 Airtó Moreira
- 24 Nana Vasconcelos
- 19 Jerry Gonzalez
- 15 Kahil El'Zabar
- 15 Han Bennink
- 12 Hamid Drake

Clarinet

- 212 Don Byron
- 95 Buddy DeFranco
- 84 Eddie Daniels
- 67 Kenny Davern
- 63 Ken Peplowski
- 54 Marty Ehrlich
- 38 Paquito D'Rivera
- 34 Jimmy Giuffrè
- 29 Alvin Batiste
- 17 Phil Woods
- 8 Anthony Braxton
- 8 Michael Moore
- 8 Louis Scialv

TDWR

- 82 Ken Peplowski
- 55 Marty Ehrlich
- 55 Michael Moore
- 38 Louis Scialv
- 33 Alvin Batiste
- 31 Kenny Davern
- 31 Chris Speed
- 29 Francois Houle
- 29 Ben Goldberg
- 28 Paquito D'Rivera
- 21 Don Byron
- 17 Gianluigi Trovosi
- 13 Eddie Daniels
- 11 Phil Woods
- 11 Kenny Davern

Flute

- 184 James Newton
- 110 Lew Tabackin
- 97 James Moody



Jane Bunnett

- 63 Frank Wess
- 46 Dave Valentin
- 40 Henry Threadgill
- 25 Hubert Laws
- 19 Sonny Fortune
- 14 Herbie Mann
- 13 Roscoe Mitchell
- 12 Jane Bunnett

TDWR

- 53 Jane Bunnett
- 37 Kent Jordan
- 33 Frank Wess
- 32 Sonny Fortune
- 32 Sam Rivers
- 28 Robert Dick
- 25 Dave Valentin
- 21 Lew Tabackin
- 18 Henry Threadgill
- 17 Jamie Baum

Vibes

- 261 Milt Jackson
- 168 Gary Burton
- 133 Bobby Hutcherson
- 45 Stefon Harris
- 40 Steve Nelson
- 24 Mike Mainieri
- 20 Joe Locke
- 18 Lionel Hampton
- 15 Terry Gibbs

TDWR

- 164 Stefon Harris
- 122 Steve Nelson
- 59 Joe Locke
- 44 Bill Ware
- 30 Khan Jamal
- 27 Gunter Hampel
- 22 Cecilia Smith
- 19 Terry Gibbs
- 17 Mike Mainieri
- 15 Jay Haggard
- 11 Bryan Carrott
- 10 Greg Bendian

Violin

- 193 Regina Carter
- 93 Billy Bang
- 79 Mark Feldman
- 62 Claude "Fiddler" Williams
- 56 Leroy Jenkins
- 48 Jean-Luc Ponty
- 44 Johnny Frigo
- 22 Svend Asmusen
- 13 John Blake

TDWR

- 54 Mark Feldman
- 53 Regina Carter

Don Albert: DB; the Johannesburg Star; Tribute magazine; Radio Today; Jazz Journal International; Comair; South Africa's Jazz Heritage.

Frank Alkyer: editorial director. DB.

Jon Andrews: DB.

Zoë Anglesey: DB; Bomb; The Multicultural Review; The Village Voice; Code; Brilliant Colors; Nylatino.

Paul de Barros: DB; Seattle Times; Earshot; ENSO.

Peter Bastian: DB; Jazz Podium, Jazzthetik, Jazz Magazine (France).

Chuck Berg: Jazz Times; Jazz Educators Journal; Topeka Capital-Journal; Lawrence Journal-World; American Music.

Larry Birnbaum: DB; Pulse!; editor-in-chief. Rhythm Music; Stereophile; Schwann Spectrum.

Bob Blumenthal: DB; Boston Globe; Atlantic Monthly.

Brett Bonner: Living Blues; Blues Access.

Philip Booth: DB; Sarasota Herald-Tribune;

Billboard; WUSF-FM (Tampa, Fla.); Jazziz.

Fred Bouchard: DB; Jazz Times; Bossa; Boston

Phoenix; WMBR-FM (Cambridge, Mass.)

Michael Bourne: DB; WBGO-FM (Newark, N.J.)

Herb Boyd: DB; NY Amsterdam News; Black World

Today; Metro Times.

Stuart Brinin: DB; Pulse!; Living Blues; Blues Access.

Pawel Brodowski: editor, Jazz Forum (Poland).

Aaron Cohen: DB; Chicago Tribune.

Thomas Conrad: DB; Stereophile.

John Corbett: DB; The Wire; Pulse!; Live!; Coda;

Chicago Reader; Chicago Sun-Times; author, *Extended*

Play: Sounding Off From John Cage To Dr. Funkenstein.

Owen Cordle: Jazz Times; The News & Observer.

Joe Cunniff: DB; Hyde Park Herald; Northwest Leader;

West Suburban Post.

Chip Delfaa: New York Post; author, *Voices Of The Jazz*

Age. Jazz Veterans: Blue Rhythms.

Len Dobbin: Mirror; New Genre; CKUT Radio.

Steve Dohlar: DB; Atlanta Journal; Jazziz.

Bill Douthart: DB; Jazz Times.

José Duarte: Portuguese Radio; www.jazzportugal.net;

A Capital.

Jonathan Eig: DB; executive editor, Chicago magazine;

Jazziz; The New Republic; Esquire.

Ed Enright: editor, DB.

John Ephland: DB; Schwann Spectrum.

J.B. Figi: programming committee/Chicago Jazz Festival.

Ken Franckling: DB; United Press International; Swing

Journal; Jazz Times; Green Mountain; Jazz Messenger.

Maurizio Franco: Musica Jazz; Musica e Dischi;

MusicaOggi Musica Reatta; Il Sismografo.

Jack Fuller: Chicago Tribune.

Phil Gallo: assistant managing editor, Variety/Daily Variety.

Ira Gitler: DB; Jazz Times; Musica Jazz (Italy);

Jazz Central Station.

Frank-John Hadley: DB; Amazon.com;

Experience Hendrix.

Jean-Marie Hacquier: Jazz Hot.

James Hale: DB; Coda; The Jazz Report;

Planet Jazz; The Ottawa Citizen.

Michael Handler: DB; Jazz Now; KCSM-FM.

Dave Helland: DB; Grammy; Pulse!

Lee Hildebrand: associate editor, Express newspaper;

SF Chronicle Sunday Datebook; Real Blues (Victoria, B.C.)

Don Hillegas: Cuadernos De Jazz; Mas Jazz.

Geoffrey Himes: Washington Post; Baltimore City Paper;

Patuxent Newspaper; Request; Fi.

Eugene Holley: DB; The Black World Today; Amazon.com;

New York Latino.

John Howard: The Groove Merchant; LA Jazz Scene.

Randi Hultin: DB; Jazznytt; Jazz Journal.

Michael Jackson: DB; New City.

John Janowiak: DB; Music Inc.

Niranjan Jhaveri: DB; Jazz Podium; Australian Jazz

Chords; Jazz Changes; Internet's Le jazz; Ragas to Rock.

Willard Jenkins: DB; Jazz Report.

Martin Johnson: Pulse! Newsday.

Fred Jung: entertainment editor, Korea Times; Jazz USA;

93.5 FM Seoul.

Leigh Kamman: The Jazz Image; Minnesota Public Radio.

George Kanzler: The Star-Ledger (NJ); Newhouse News.

Bob Karlovits: DB.

Kirby Kean: DB; Request; Carbon 14.

Kiyoshi Koyama: Swing Journal; NHK-FM.

Jason Koransky: associate editor, DB.

Peter Kostakis: liner notes writer.

Rob Laurentop: In De Club; The Bulletin.

John Litweiler: Writer and editor, Encyclopedia

Britannica; Coda.

Jaap Lüdeke: DB; Big Band!

Paul J. MacArthur: The Jazz Report; Houston Press; Event;

houston.sidewalk; MusicHound Jazz: The Essential

Album Guide; KSHU-FM (Huntsville, TX).

John McDonough: DB; Wall Street Journal; NPR.

Jim Macnie: DB; Jazziz; Village Voice.

Howard Mandel: DB; Jazziz; The Wire; Future Jazz.

Pulse!; The Wire; Jazzhouse; The New

Grove Dictionary of Jazz.

Rick Mattingly: DB; Modern Drummer; Musician;

Percussive Notes; Jazziz.

Virgil Mihaiu: editor, Jazz Context (Romania); Jazz Notes;

author, *The Resonance Box. Jazzorelief.*

Massimo Milano: Jazz; Jam; Amadeus; Il Carnet; Il

Manifesto; Il Sismografo; Cuadernos de Jazz.

Dan Morgenstern: director, Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies.

Alan Nahigian: DB; Jazz Times; Jazziz.

Michael G. Nastos: Cadence; Detroit Jazz Magazine;

WEMU-FM (Ypsilanti, Mich.)

Stuart Nicholson: author, *Jazz: The 1980's Resurgence.*

Ella Fitzgerald

Billie Holiday, A History of Jazz Rock, Jazz Wise; BBC

Music Magazine; Jazz UK

Dan Ouellette: features editor, Schwann Spectrum; DB;

Stereophile; SF Chronicle;

Ted Panken: DB.

Thierry Pérémarti: Jazzman, New York Correspondent.

Terry Perkins: DB; St. Louis Post-Dispatch;

Riverfront Times; St. Louis American.

Michael Point: DB; Austin American-Statesman;

Jazziz; Houton Press, Blues Across.

Doug Ramsey: author, *Jazz Matters: Reflections*

of the Music and Some of Its Makers; Jazz Times;

www.musicsreview.com; www.allaboutjazz.com.

Howard Reich: DB; Chicago Tribune.

Derk Richardson: DB; San Francisco Bay Guardian;

East Bay Express; SFGATE.com; Jazziz; Jazz Times;

Yoga Journal.

Russell Arthur Roberts: Jazz Now; LA Jazz Scene; JazzUSA.

Mark Ruffin: WBEZ-FM; Chicago magazine; JazzUSA;

Chicago Sun Times; N'Digo Magazine.

Robert D. Rusch: editor, Cadence.

Lloyd Sachs: DB; Chicago Sun-Times.

Mitchell Seidel: DB; photo editor/contributing

editor-Hot House; The Star-Ledger (Newark, NJ).

Phil Schaap: DB; curator/archivist, WKCR, Madison

Magazine.

Chris Sheridan: DB; author, *Count Basie:*

A Bio-Discography. Dis Hunt: A Cannonball Adderley

bio-discography.

Fred Shuster: LA Daily News; Mojo; NME.

Joel Simpson: DB; Piano Today.

Will Smith: DB.

Jack Sohmer: Jazz Times; The Mississippi Rag.

Yves Sports: publisher/editor, JazzHot.

Zan Stewart: DB; Stereophile; Musica Jazz.

W. Royal Stokes: editor, Jazz Notes; author, *Jazz Profiles.*

Andrew Sussman: jazz writer.

Ron Sweetman: CKCU-FM (Ottawa, Ontario); Coda;

Planet Jazz; Just Jazz; Quartet.

Jonathan Tabak: DB; Billboard, Oxford American;

Off Beat; New Orleans Times.

Robin Tolleson: DB; Mix; Modern Drummer.

Russell Woessner: DB; Philadelphia Weekly.

Josef Woodard: LA Times; Entertainment Weekly;

Jazz Times; Jazziz; Santa Barbara Independent; Launch.

Scott Yanow: *All Music Guide To Jazz;* Jazziz;

Cadence; Bird; Mississippi Rag.

David Zaworski: assistant editor, DB.

Mike Zwerin: International Herald Tribune.

- 52 John Blake
- 33 Johnny Frigo
- 25 Mat Maneri
- 22 Claude "Fiddler" Williams
- 22 Billy Bang

Miscellaneous Instrument

- 114 **Toots Thielemans (harmonica)**
- 109 Howard Johnson (tuba)
- 90 Steve Turre (conch shells)
- 55 Bela Fleck (banjo)
- 53 David Murray (bass clarinet)
- 39 Richard Galliano (accordian)
- 34 Bob Stewart (tuba)
- 33 Ernst Reijseger (cello)
- 15 Howard Levy (harmonica)
- 13 Erik Friedlander (cello)

TDWR

- 40 **Dino Saluzzi (bandoneon)**
- 31 Erik Friedlander (cello)
- 28 Bela Fleck (banjo)
- 25 Marty Ehrlich (bass clarinet)
- 25 Howard Johnson (tuba)
- 22 Scott Robinson (bass sax)
- 22 Bob Stewart (tuba)
- 21 James Carter (bass clarinet)
- 21 David Murray (bass clarinet)
- 18 Tom Varner (french horn)
- 15 Andy Narell (steel drums)
- 14 Guy Klucsevsek (accordian)
- 13 Ernst Reijseger (cello)
- 12 Richard Galliano (accordian)

Male Vocalist

- 126 **Kevin Mahogany**
- 104 Andy Bey
- 101 Joe Williams
- 83 Mark Murphy
- 72 Kurt Elling
- 59 Jimmy Scott
- 52 Tony Bennett
- 44 Bobby McFerrin
- 34 Jon Hendricks
- 28 Ray Charles
- 23 Freddy Cole
- 16 Mose Allison
- 13 John Pizzarelli
- 10 Clark Terry

TDWR

- 97 **Kurt Elling**
- 65 Freddy Cole
- 47 Andy Bey
- 44 Bob Dorough
- 43 Miles Griffith
- 39 Kevin Mahogany
- 27 Phil Minton
- 26 John Pizzarelli
- 24 Dave Frishberg
- 16 Everett Greene
- 13 Giacomo Gates

Female Vocalist

- TDWR**
- 80 **Patricia Barber**
- 34 Diana Krall
- 34 Nnenna Freelon
- 32 Dominique Eade
- 30 Kitty Margolis
- 28 Sheila Jordan
- 23 Claire Martin
- 17 Nancy King

- 17 Jeanne Lee
- 14 Teri Thornton
- 13 Kendra Shank
- 12 Dee Dee Bridgewater
- 11 Ann Dyer

Blues Artist

- 126 **B. B. King**
- 83 Taj Mahal
- 49 Buddy Guy
- 44 John Lee Hooker
- 40 Charles Brown
- 36 Otis Rush
- 28 Keb' Mo'
- 27 Olu Dara
- 24 Joe Louis Walker
- 20 Pinetop Perkins
- 12 R.L. Burnside
- 11 Robert Cray
- 10 Joe Williams

TDWR

- 53 **Keb' Mo'**
- 35 Olu Dara
- 29 Shemekia Copeland
- 26 Joe Louis Walker
- 24 Corey Harris
- 22 Lucky Peterson
- 20 Alvin Youngblood Hart
- 15 Jonny Lang
- 15 Robert Lockwood Jr.
- 15 Otis Rush
- 15 Derek Trucks
- 11 Ronnie Earl
- 10 Buddy Guy

Blues Group

- 69 **B. B. King**
- 60 Roomful of Blues
- 26 Ronnie Earl &

- The Broadcasters
- 24 Clarence Gatemouth Brown
- 22 Joe Louis Walker
- 19 Buddy Guy
- 15 Robert Cray
- 13 John Lee Hooker
- 12 Cephas & Wiggins
- 11 Taj Mahal Phantom Blues Band

TDWR

- 20 **Cephas & Wiggins**
- 18 Taj Mahal Phantom Blues Band
- 14 Lucky Peterson
- 13 Derek Trucks Band
- 10 Little Charlie & the Nightcats

Beyond Artist

- 34 **Cesaria Evora**
- 34 **Lauryn Hill**
- 27 Marc Ribot
- 22 Van Morrison
- 20 Lyle Lovett
- 17 Caetano Veloso
- 15 Joni Mitchell
- 15 Robert Wyatt
- 13 Olu Dara
- 11 John Zorn
- 11 Gilberto Gil
- 10 Rabih Abou-Khalil
- 10 Dr. John

TDWR

- 22 **Rufus Wainwright**
- 15 Virginia Rodriguez
- 14 Baaba Maal
- 14 Ben Neill
- 13 Lucinda Williams

- 10 Ben Folds
- 10 M'Shell NdegeOcello
- 10 Ry Cooder

Beyond Album

- 28 **Lauryn Hill, *Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* (RuffHouse)**
- 28 **Lucinda Williams, *Car Wheels On A Gravel Road* (Mercury)**
- 19 Bob Dylan, *Live 1966* (Columbia/Legacy)
- 14 Elvis Costello/Burt Bacharach, *Painted From Memory* (Mercury)
- 13 Bloque, *Bloque* (Luaka Bop)
- 13 Robert Wyatt, *Shleep* (Hannibal/Rykodisc)
- 12 Marc Ribot, *Los Cubanos Postizos* (Atlantic)
- 10 Latin Playboys, *Dose* (Atlantic)
- 10 Tom Zé, *Fabrication Defect* (Luaka Bop)

Beyond Group

- TDWR**
- 25 **Bloque**
- 18 Oranj Symphonette
- 15 Los Hombres Calientes
- 12 Derek Trucks Band
- 11 Grassy Knoll
- 10 Ralph Irizarry and Timbalaya
- 10 Latin Playboys
- 10 New Orleans Klezmer All-Stars



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CD REVIEWS

AUGUST 1999



Lew Soloff

With A Song In My Heart
Milestone 9290

★★★★

The inveterate sideman steps forward and takes the spot. In this case, a welcome move for one who's lifted the bandstand for Blood Sweat & Tears, Gil Evans, Carla Bley and many others, as Lew Soloff has in his 30-plus-year career.

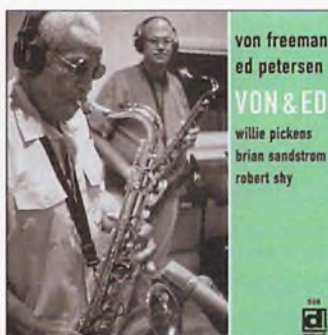
It's by no means Soloff's first date as a leader, as he's recorded for Paddle Wheel, Sweet Basil and Electric Bird in various settings, often using synth and/or electric guitar. Here, he's in acoustic surroundings, playing a corner of the hyphenated American songbook (Arlen-Mercer, Kern-Fields, Rodgers-Hart). He's known as a virtuoso and high-range hitter, but in this setting Soloff is relaxed, elegant, sweet; his forays into the upper arena are lyrical and melodic, never calisthenic or white-knuckled. *With A Song In My Heart* is basically a study for Harmon mute (reportedly producer Makoto Kimata's idea), a device that Soloff deploys with enough variety and depth for it not to seem limited, even though he never unplugs his horn. Listen to him exploring the melancholy line to "I'm A Fool To Want You" or soloing up high over Victor Lewis' fingers-on-kit drumming on Soloff's own Turkish flavored modal number "Istanbul"—no strain, gorgeous sound, joy in motion.

Tastefully restrained concert harp—played by Soloff's wife, Emily Mitchell (for whom the trumpeter's heartfelt "One For Emily" is presumably writ)—emphasizes the sentimental romanticism of Tchaikovsky's theme ("Andantino"), arranged as a jazz ballad, as well as Dimitri Tiomkin's "Deguello" from the soundtrack to *Rio Bravo*. As usual, Mulgrew Miller is a pleasure to hear. He contributes both as an ideal accompanist—adding subtle little piano asides and harmonic touches—and as an idea-packed soloist. And where I'm not always won over by George Mraz's sound, here he adds the perfect, understated support. A record that's not going to jump out at you,

but will catch you by surprise some time later—a real sleeper. —John Corbett

With A Song In My Heart: Come Rain Or Come Shine; Andantino From Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4 (2nd Movement); The Way You Look Tonight; I'm A Fool To Want You; Mea Culpa; Deguello; Istanbul; One For Emily; With A Song In My Heart. (68:32)

Personnel: Lew Soloff, trumpet; Mulgrew Miller, piano; George Mraz, bass; Victor Lewis, drums; Emily Mitchell, harp (2, 6).



Von Freeman & Ed Petersen

Von & Ed
Delmark 508

★★½

In his liners to this disc critic Lloyd Sachs reminds us that high concepts for jazz records are de rigueur these days, adding that in comparison, a mere blowing session such as *Von & Ed* is "disarmingly low." He's not wrong. But that qualifier should be "disappointingly." The theory behind this two-tenor outing is obvious: Set 'em up and let 'em run. But that strategy—which treats even the slightest programmatic ideas as a contrivance—can be a double-edged sword. Here the results are more perplexing than refreshing.

At 76, Freeman's a keenly idiosyncratic improviser who can create chills with his unconventional phrasing and disturbingly rich tone. Peterson's a clever adept several notches below his partner in creative acumen and many years his junior in age. A pair of Chicago staples, they've often shared the bandstand. Indeed, to a large degree, *Von & Ed* banks on rapport. But such kinship is wounded by context. Relying on nothing but obvious tunes and tempos, the pair's substantial blowing wiles just can't fully juice this session. At best, it's utterly ordinary.

What starts out acceptable quickly turns clichéd. There's a genuine elan found at the onset of "Mr. P.C." But the ears start to glaze over midway into the tune. It's pretty inconsiderate to begin a record with a protracted chestnut whose solo schematic is tenor/tenor/piano/drums—especially when there are four

more just like it on the slate. As "Four" skips with a similar uptempo groove, echoes of the previous tune waft through the air. But this take of "Four" is static. Despite some nifty Von gliding in the initial choruses, the track never gets off the ground.

Much of the blame has to be saddled on the rhythm section. There's little breathing room in the space between Robert Shy's incessant ride cymbal and Brian Sandstrom's unremitting bass. As these extended pieces begin to blend into each other, the pair become more and more one-dimensional. "Lover Man" finds them foraging for unity. Pianist Willie Pickens comps incisively throughout, but can't muster the kind of content that sustains a listener's attention during his solos. And he solos on every tune.

Several glowing moments buoy the tedious stretches. Peterson's cavorting in the middle of "Mr. P.C." brings the rhythm section in gear—everyone seems to be knocking on the same door. And Vonski's near psychedelic escapade on "A Night In Tunisia" wonderfully evinces the queer essence of his timbre (if you want to hear more gorgeous eccentricities, pick up his new *Live At The Blue Note* disc).

Remember the old maxim "two monologues don't make a dialog?" Well, five chatty pals don't make a conversation. Or a compelling conversation, anyway. *Von & Ed* is a protracted exercise flecked with occasional bon mots and clever quips. That's a concept that needs firming up. —Jim Macnie

Von & Ed: Mr. P.C.; Four; Lover Man; A Night In Tunisia; Lover. (69:46)

Personnel: Von Freeman, tenor sax; Ed Petersen, tenor sax; Willie Pickens, piano; Brian Sandstrom, bass; Robert Shy, drums.



Junko Onishi

Fragile
Blue Note 98108

★★

The best cuts on *Fragile* are the ones by keyboardist/leader Junko Onishi, "Complexions" and "Eulogia Variations." Not only are they innovative excursions, they address the apparent theme to this album, namely, one of experimentation. (A bit of back-

KEY

Excellent
Very Good
Good
Fair
Poor

★★★★★
★★★★
★★★
★★
★

ground: Since 1998, as the story goes, Onishi has been under a three-year curse, according to Japanese tradition. Her response? It's time to boogie, veer away from her more straight-ahead, mainstream roots and try on some new hats, to be a chance-taker: After all, what has she got to lose?)

Onishi's pieces are more interesting, and say more than the boxes she puts herself in with '60s pop hits like "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'," "Hey Joe" and "Sunshine Of Your Love." This is so because the band, including Onishi, sounds like it's playing it all for the first time, from a jazz deficit. In fact, they did, in an attempt to play a more "perfect" jazz, according to Onishi.

The "jazz deficit," incidentally, refers to jazz musicians normally associated with the but-toned-down world of fresh-scrubbed traditionalists, specifically, the worlds of pianist Benny Green and trumpeter Wynton Marsalis. Bassist Reginald Veal (Marsalis) and Karriem Riggins (Green), for example, sound adept, like studio musicians, and show that they too have grown up listening to and enjoying pop music.

But, playing pop music as a jazz musician takes more than just getting the beats and chords right. Case in point: Instead of just creating a scene, like Onishi does with her organ on "Compared To What," complete with volume, lots of fervent piano chords and the tempered, too-cool soul-searching of Peace (the vocalist), Onishi should have stuck to experimenting more with her electric keyboards, as she so nobly started the album with (her

"BWV"). Or just plain worked around the sketches she came up with for the other two tracks of hers mentioned above. According to the bio supplied, she announced in the studio that the band should just play in "D-Minor or something" on the medium-tempo Ornettish swinger "Complexions." This cut features two drummers both playing brushes differently on opposite channels: It has the effect of throwing the listener off track, ever so slightly, and to great effect. You don't know where the music's headed, which is a good thing. A very good thing. "Compared To What" is played with above-average competence, but just lies there as a flat, inferior cover.

The irony here is that Onishi sounds more open and experimental with the few road signs she gives herself and the band when playing her own music, whereas the improvising and dramatic tricks she pulls on her stuff just have no room to breathe in material like Cream's "Sunshine Of Your Love." These pop versions are bereft of mystery or any sense of unknowing. If these covers are her guilty pleasures, that's one thing. But if *Fragile* is about taking chances, Onishi sounds like she's just getting started. But not to worry: She has one, maybe two years left on her curse to let it all hang out.

—John Ephland

Fragile: BWV; Complexions; You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'; Compared To What; Hey Joe; Eulogia Variations; Sunshine Of Your Love. (56:49)
Personnel: Junko Onishi, keyboards; Reginald Veal, bass, electric bass; Ol Skool Jamz/Karriem Riggins, Motohiko Hino (2, 4), Tamaya Honda (5, 7), drums; Peace, vocal (4).



Buddy DeFranco Dave McKenna

Do Nothing Till
You Hear From Us!

Concord 4851

★★★★

Buddy DeFranco's consistent capacity for densely packed, careening improvisations pretty much let him retire the greatest-clarinetist trophy more than three decades ago. This, his second recording with Dave McKenna for Concord, should renew his lease on the prize, at least on the strength of the musicianship.

Yet, it is McKenna who is the engine, both rhythmically and emotionally, in this trio filled out

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THE HOT BOX

CDs	CRITICS	John McDonough	John Corbett	Jim Macnie	John Ephland
LEW SOLOFF <i>With A Song In My Heart</i>		★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★
VON FREEMAN & ED PETERSEN <i>Von & Ed</i>		★★★1/2	★★★★	★★1/2	★★★1/2
JUNKO ONISHI <i>Fragile</i>		★★	★★	★★★	★★
BUDDY DEFRANCO/DAVE MCKENNA <i>Do Nothing Till You Hear From Us!</i>		★★★1/2	★★★★	★★★	★★★1/2

CRITICS' COMMENTS

LEW SOLOFF, *With A Song In My Heart*

Soloff delivers an unadorned quartet package of standards in which there's not a lot not to like. The impression is one of an excellent musician, but one without a singular voice. Excellence is reward enough here, although asking Soloff to play every note into a Harmon mute seems an unnecessary interdiction of his capacities. —JMD

Todd Barkan does a great job of casting also-rans in a complimentary light, and this date with section and studio maven Soloff places a warm glow around the trumpeter's many skills. —JM

This album is late-nite New York, in the spirit of moody, '50s-era Miles. In fact, the mood is so consistently "when lights are low," with Soloff playing the bejeesus out of his Harmon mute, one wishes he'd have dropped his gloves and belted a few. Extra points for very good trumpet in a rare setting nowadays. —JE

VON FREEMAN & ED PETERSEN, *Von & Ed*

A lively, often visceral, sometimes ragged meeting of two territory tenors from Chicago on the subject of five bop standards. Contrasting sounds give balance and a sort of symmetry to the loose-minded front line. A fast, quick thinking "Lover," though, keeps the playing in a relatively tight groove and sends off sparks. —JMD

A million cheers for Vonski! One of the greatest living tenor players, still too much of a Chicago secret, he is possessed of a very personal intonation and a singer's phrasing. He jams an endless stream of melodic and rhythmic ideas into each solo. With Mr. Petersen as a foil, he's very much spotted here; Petersen's bright, Trane-oriented sound couldn't be further from Freeman's veering, dark, sweetly sour, sometimes totally out-to-lunch microtonal bop. Check Von's opening gesture (sans rhythm section) on "A Night In Tunisia" for a wiggly worth replaying over and over again. —JC

It's hard to believe these two haven't been recorded on this classic Chicago label until now, given the number of around-town associations they've had. *Von & Ed* lives up to its billing as a slice of what one might hear at the Green Mill, say. But, unlike the McKenna/DeFranco set, this one at times boils (instead of cooks, or simmers). The songs themselves, coming from a Chicago hard-bop spot, seem almost secondary to the fact that these musicians are ready, willing and able, playing what they do best. —JE

JUNKO ONISHI, *Fragile*

I hate music that makes me think I've blown my speakers. That such distortions are intentional doesn't mitigate the fleeting panic that comes from thinking \$500 in repair costs, which is the opening and closing message of this poundingly feverish and energetic CD. —JMD

Can't quite figure out this one—is it just confirmation that anything with a pop connection is deemed commercially viable? Floundering in interminable, noodling jams (in the barely treading-water sense of the word), this disc seems to revel in the shock that some hypothetical fan might feel hearing Onishi on electric instruments. That's not enough to carry the record, nor are the throwaway soul songs. —JC

There are great moments; put "Complexions" on repeat for a glimpse at modern trio thoughtfulness. But by simultaneously pushing three personalities—pop tunes, Milesian electrospawl, intricate acoustica—*Fragile* seems like a hit-or-miss career retrospective. —JM

BUDDY DEFRANCO/DAVE MCKENNA, *Do Nothing Till You Hear From Us!*

To think how long DeFranco's been at it, and he's still pushing, as his two originals on this extremely listenable, enjoyable outing make clear. "Skinnin' Rabbits" should make speed freaks take notice—what a line! McKenna and Cohn (who's got the perfect sound for this pared-down context) are right there, but my attention is trained on DeFranco, who in this case never lets me down. —JC

Great to hear the precision, but there's just a wisp of mechanics looming over the grace of this duet date. Maybe they should be recorded live next time around. —JM

Aging gracefully is putting mildly what McKenna and DeFranco do here, as they swing, revel and even sound like they're singing the blues on a well-balanced program with guitarist Cohn. A highlight: The vets' rendering of the Ellington/Strayhorn classic "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing" sounds somehow novel (or terribly modern) for them, and yet so at home. —JE

by the wonderful playing of guitarist Joe Cohn. On the theory that differences attract, DeFranco and McKenna, who are very different, are a well matched pair as virtuosos. But the pianist swings with such a directness and heat that he creates an unintentional consequence at his partner's expense. For all his skills, DeFranco's sound on the clarinet is, as it has always been, curiously dry and plasticized, whether in flight at battle speed or on a lyrical statement such as "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing."

It was as if he staked out exclusive timber between Goodman's sizzle and Shaw's more stately formality, and created the third benchmark style for the instrument in the bebop era. If a sound can be built for speed, DeFranco has it. His nimble, double-time arpeggios on the CD's ballads come at you from multiple directions, seemingly at once—up, down, sideways—like streaks of strobing lights criss-crossing in the dark. Their craft and intelligence have many rewards, including a keen sense of detail, design and architectural variety. But while I would not presume to know DeFranco's private passions, they lack the colors and rhythmic simplicity that portray passion and swing in a mainstream setting.

McKenna, by contrast, works in a more percussive style neither traditional nor modern in which each note delivers its own impact and connects to the other in a rolling, pulsing drive defined by his left hand, which is where the executive authority of his attack resides. There is a visceral rhythmic interior to McKenna's best mid- and up-tempo work here ("Speak Low," "Out Of Nowhere," "You And The Night ..."), and it is the backbone of the session, giving DeFranco a rock-solid jazz foil against which to play. —John McDonough

Do Nothing Till You Hear From Us!: Finegan's Walk; Skinnin' Rabbits; Lucky To Be Me; Out Of Nowhere; You And The Night And The Music; Something To Live For; Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me; A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing; Speak Low; Oh You Crazy Moon; Gone With The Wind; Easy Living. (64:44)

Personnel: Buddy DeFranco, clarinet; Dave McKenna, piano; Joe Cohn, guitar.



Matthew Shipp

DNA

Thirsty Ear 57067

★★★★

Matthew Shipp is taking a vacation: He has decided that this recording would be his last as a leader for an indeterminate amount of time. Whatever the reasons for his

decision (see June '99), this CD is a worthy addition to his already expansive discography.

As has been the case with much of Shipp's best work, *DNA* is a duo with bassist William Parker. In this setting, the oblique qualities of his compositions are heightened. The pair also shows how their immersion in American improv's furthestmost branches work best as part of a sympathetic dialogue.

Shipp's diminished triads shape Parker's dissonant arco buzz in what sounds like a stinging rebuke of D.W. Griffith's silent-film vision of the South on "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Shipp and Parker also use brief and intense repetition of lines during Shipp's title track and his "Orbit." In a different context, this minimalist technique could have become irritating, but here it is a crucial part of the disc's flowing tension and release. What's also notable is that Shipp never relies on a dull percussive attack to compensate for an absent drummer. Parker's opening solo measures on "Cell Sequence" reinforce that he is one of the most strikingly haunting arco players around.

Shipp transcends the disc's tension through "Amazing Grace," which may be his last recorded piece for a while. During its succinct and absorbing two minutes, he not only lends contemporary force to this spiritual, but his performance is an inspired exit. —Aaron Cohen

DNA: When Johnny Comes Marching Home; Cell Sequence; Genetic Alphabet; DNA; Orbit; Mr. Chromosome; Amazing Grace. (47:58)

Personnel: Matthew Shipp, piano; William Parker, bass.



Knut Hamre Steve Tibbetts

Å
Hannibal 1438

★★★★½

Think of Steve Tibbetts' musical world as a closely guarded enclave. His themes and methods are consistent and highly developed, but outsiders are infrequently admitted. The music has evolved gradually as the guitarist selectively and thoughtfully incorporates external influences. In recent years, he's absorbed musical elements from Indonesia, Tibet and Norway. Å (just say "ah") successfully joins the hardingfele, a.k.a. hardanger fiddle,

with Tibbetts' distinctive, often beautiful constructions. Emblematic of Norwegian folk music, the hardingfele features four sympathetic strings that generate its characteristic micro-tones. In Utne, Tibbetts recorded fiddlers Knut Hamre and Turid Spildo performing tunes inspired by traditional themes. Back home, he manipulated and processed the tapes adding rhythm tracks from percussionist Marc Anderson and bassist Anthony Cox, as well as acoustic guitar and samples.

Fidelity to Norwegian folk tradition is highly suspect, but Å fits very well within the contemplative, acoustic vein of Tibbetts' recordings. The cyclical melodies and edgy harmonies of the fiddles are always focal points of these arrangements. Tracks like "Spelar Guro" and "Huldrami" suggest dance rhythms and benefit from the support of Cox's bass, though it's well back in the mix. Tibbetts surrounds Hamre's plaintive, bitter-sweet melodies with airy but subtly detailed musical environments. In these settings, the guitar offers continuity and warmth, though it's rarely the center of attention. This CD presents a curious context for the hardingfele, and the high, chilly sound of the fiddle will challenge the uninitiated listener. Given its limited expressive range, the hardingfele's allure can wear thin over the course of 12 tracks. —Jon Andrews

Å: Olav Bergslund; Huldra-mi; Trebakken; Huldreslåtter; Noringen; Ånde Fjellmannjenta; Huldreslått; Spelar Guro; Baansull; Bygdatræen; Baansull. (53:55)

Personnel: Knut Hamre, hardingfele; Steve Tibbetts, guitar, bouzouki, samples; Turid Spildo, hardingfele, voice; Marc Anderson, drums, percussion, gongs; Anthony Cox, bass.

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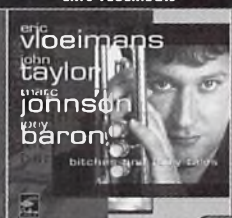
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Miles Davis Various DJs

Panthalassa: The Remixes

Columbia 69897

★★★



Mark Isham

Miles Remembered: The Silent Way Project

Columbia 69901

★★★★½

Though Miles Davis has been gone for eight years, his music remains a potent influence, particularly his late '60s and early '70s work.

Panthalassa: The Remixes carries remixing fever to a third level, as producers, including Bill Laswell, remix tracks from Laswell's *Panthalassa* "reconstruction" of recordings spliced together by Teo Macero. Most tracks constitute radical remixes, as the producers transform the underlying material with erratic results.

I expect remixes to illuminate some facet of the original or manifest its spirit in a new way. DJ Krush and the team of King Britt and Philip Charles succeed by using electronic effects to surround Miles' trumpet with eerie, almost-extraterrestrial atmospheres. Krush's surreal reconfiguration of "Black Satin/On The Corner" sounds like a natural extension of the original, but disappointingly, it's only available on vinyl. With its deep echoes and dub influences, Laswell's "Subterranean Channel Remix" of "On The Corner" becomes the centerpiece of the CD, a solid complement to his *Panthalassa* creations. Laswell has reconstructed and expanded the tune using previously unissued solos from the original sessions. Hearing Miles' playing on this track whets one's appetite to hear more of these tapes. Less satisfying mixes emphasize rhythm, but fail to make a point. This CD demonstrates the importance of the producer's taste and discretion, especially when the artist can't defend his work.

The Davis tribute CD has become as much a sub-genre as a remix album. The good ones, including Mark Isham's homage to late '60s and early '70s Miles, take something essential and refract it through the artist's perspective, avoiding mimicry. Recorded live by the trumpeter's working quintet, *Miles Remembered: The Silent Way Project* affirms the continued vitality of tunes like "Right Off" and "It's About That Time." Isham's group, which includes longtime collaborators in guitarist Peter Maunu and

bassist Doug Lunn, approaches the material with infectious high spirits and raucous energy. Maunu's guitar textures enhance and blend with the leader's long tones.

Consider *Miles Remembered* an atmospheric complement rather than a substitute for the Davis originals. The best tracks add new dimensions to familiar material. Along with the stillness of "In A Silent Way," Isham's clever arrangement (incorporating "Milestones") and warm performance radiate new contentment and optimism. His update of "All Blues" suggests Davis' "Tutu," while "Great Expectations" takes on a sinister undercurrent. More such innovations would have improved other tracks. Isham's original "Internet" offers tense, tightly-wound trumpet work along with Steve Cardenas' "jazz-rock" guitar solos.

—Jon Andrews

Panthalassa: The Remixes: Shhh (SEA4 Miles Remix); Rated X; In A Silent Way; On The Corner (Subterranean Channel Mix); Rated X; Black Satin/On The Corner. (47:01)

Personnel: Miles Davis, trumpet; King Britt and Philip Charles, synthesizers, remix and production (1); Doc Scott (2), DJ Cam (3), Bill Laswell (4), Jamie Myerson (5), DJ Krush (6), remix and production; Mark Boyce, synthesizers (1).

Miles Remembered: The Silent Way Project: In A Silent Way—Milestones; Right Off (Theme From Jack Johnson); Internet; All Blues; It's About That Time; Azael; Spanish Key; Ife; Great Expectations; Black Satin. (68:25)

Personnel: Mark Isham, trumpet; Peter Maunu, Steve Cardenas, electric guitars; Doug Lunn, bass; Michael Barsimanto, drums.



Charlie Hunter Leon Parker

Duo

Blue Note 99187

★★★★

Recorded live in the studio (with the exception of one cut spiced with overdubbed percussion), *Duo* captures two of the most promising artists of their generation listening to and playing off each other—plus, most significantly, stretching beyond their comfort zones. While not adventurous in the innovative sense, this disc nonetheless showcases the plucky pair effortlessly delivering a spirited and, on occasion, pensive set.

This is Hunter's first recording since relocating to New York from San Francisco, a change of scenery he hoped would take his career to a new level. Based on *Duo* (his fifth CD for Blue Note and sixth overall), the move has paid off. This represents his finest performance on disc to date. While noteworthy from the get-go for his remarkable ability to lay down fully devel-

oped bass lines on three strings while simultaneously executing rhythm or lead duties on the other five, Hunter uses the ample sonic space on *Duo* to drive the proceedings with a stronger lyricism, a smoother groove and, in the case of the two gorgeous ballads—an enchanting take on “You Don’t Know What Love Is” and a striking rendition of Brian Wilson’s “Don’t Talk (Put Your Head On My Shoulder)” —a passionate romanticism. He also doesn’t overuse one of his trademark sounds, the B-3 organ effect, opting instead for cool-toned lines and an almost eerie vibrato. Plus, Hunter feels confident enough in his voice and ability to stamp his signature on a song by sticking close to the melody to opt out of taking solo excursions on some tunes, including the jaunty original “Recess.”

As for Parker, he exhibits the same supreme taste in rhythmic color and texture that he’s shown on his own recordings. With his stripped-down kit, he drives the show with clipping/clicking stick work, a caressive brush touch, shiver-to-splash cymbal play and, when he senses the spirit moving, the requisite rumble.

While the ballads are the CD’s revelations, Hunter and Parker also love a good groove. They launch into several, including the Cubano-flavored “Mean Streak” and the danceable “Spin Seekers.” Overall, chalk up a high score for Hunter, who has consistently shown in the early stages of his career that he’s not satisfied to stand pat.

—Dan Ouellette

Duo: Mean Streak; Belief; Do That Then; You Don’t Know What Love Is; Recess; Don’t Talk (Put Your Head On My Shoulder); The Last Time; Dark Corner; The Spin Seekers; Calypso For Grampa. (44:30)

Personnel: Charlie Hunter, 8-string guitar; Leon Parker, drums, percussion.



Jonas Hellborg
Aram of the Two Rivers
Live in Syria
Bardo 038

★★★★½

Avishai Cohen
Devotion
Stretch 9021

★★½

One might reasonably fear that a bass guitar hero like Jonas Hellborg would trample all over the delicate music of Syria. Likewise,

one might reasonably hope that Israeli-born Avishai Cohen’s second album as a leader would be even more splendid than his first, *Adama*. But in both cases, one would be wrong. Hellborg’s album, for the most part, is a restrained, group-sensitive performance with traditional musicians; Cohen’s, an ambitious studio effort with some marvelous bass solos, but, alas, a lot of overwritten arrangements and unconsummated ideas.

Hellborg’s disc documents two live shows, one in Damascus, played with two derbukas (drums), riqq (tambourine) and ney (flute), and the other in Aleppo, with violin replacing the ney. The modes presumably are Syrian (Aram is the Biblical name for that country) and the music, for the most part, is flowing, fluid, transcendent and linear. Stand-outs are the whirling, folkloric dance rhythms of “Akkadia,” where Hellborg’s swift clusters of hammered-on figures echo the crisp crack of the derbukas, and “Suriya,” which features the expressive violin of instrumental pop star Hadi Backdonas. Hellborg’s solo on “Sham” has the brooding, rubato feel of flamenco. The muslin texture of Mased Sri al Deen’s ney also is a highlight.

As an improviser, Hellborg suffers from a rock-jam tendency to be swept away by rhythms, rather than initiating melodies against them. This is especially true when he falls back on percussive, Cream-style aggression, as he does on the banal “Salah Al Din.” (Backdonas’ flirtation with digital delay on “Aram Of Zoba” is another unwelcome reminder of power fusion excess.) But when he’s listening carefully to his hosts, which is often, Hellborg really excels, developing melodic kernels into ever larger, more decorative figures. He attacks the four strings of his Wechter acoustic bass like a guitar, strumming, chording, hammering-on and reaching across its squeaky metal strings for harmonies.

Cohen, by contrast, though he plays some electric on this album, is like a bass violinist, with a warm, natural sound, a fleet momentum that recalls Dave Holland and a probing sense

of modal mystery that is dark and joyous. Playing here with the original drummer (Jeff Ballard) and trombonist (Steve Davis) from his “other” band, Chick Corea’s Origin, Cohen occasionally echoes his boss’s chipper optimism (“The Gift,” “Ot Kain”). The disc gets off to a promising start with the cool and churning “El Capitan & The Ship At Sea,” which has a telegraphic bass figure that expands into a lucid and melodic solo. “Deep Blue” has a good jazz groove, and the funky lattice of rhythms on “Megril” meshes nicely, as well. But what is organically integrated on these tunes becomes an annoying undercurrent elsewhere, with nearly every track featuring a busy, rhythmic counter-figure, the worst offender being the jumpy line behind the soloists on “The Gift.”

Counterpoint overkill is compounded by crowding in the middle register, which muddies Davis’ golden trombone on, for just one example, “Angels Of Peace.” The grandiose string quartet arrangement on “Ti Da Doo Di Da” doesn’t add much, either. Overall, Cohen would have been better off focusing his jubilant ideas before going into the studio, or else spending more time ironing out the wrinkles once he got there. There are a couple of bad calls, too: a jokey, Russian-accented introduction to “Slow Tune” (undoubtedly funny at the time) and a florid vocal on “Linda De Mi Corazon.”

—Paul de Barros

Aram Of The Two Rivers: Live In Syria: Aram of Damascus; Sham; Akkadia; Aram Of Zoba; Salah Al Din; Suriya. (54:30)
Personnel: Jonas Hellborg, bass guitar; Mased Sri al Deen, ney; Hadi Backdonas, violin; Nabil Khaiat, riqq; Tarek Malas, Mahfouz al Hosaini, derbuka.

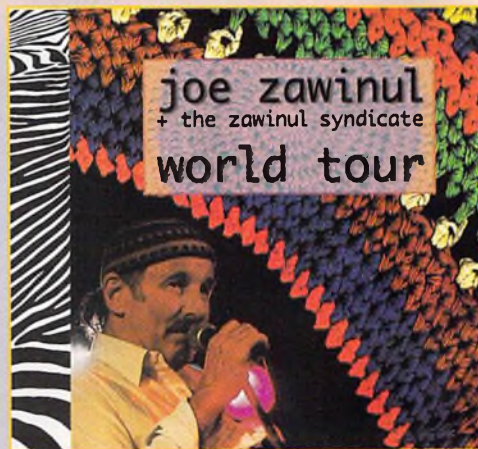
Devotion: El Capitan & The Ship At Sea; The Gift; Bass Suite #3 Part 1; Ot Kain; Angels Of Peace; Ti Da Doo Di Da; Linda De Mi Corazon; Deep Blue; Igor; Slow Tune; Megril; Musa; Candela City; Bass Suite #3 Part 2. (61:24)

Personnel: Avishai Cohen, acoustic and electric bass, piano, synthesizer, percussion; Jason Lindner, piano; Jimmy Greene, tenor and soprano saxophone, flute; Steve Davis, trombone; Amos Hoffman, guitar, oud; Jeff Ballard, drums and percussion; Ida Levin, Carmit Zori, violin; Robert Rinehart, viola; Fred Sherry, cello; Claudia Acuna, Danny Freedman, Joshua Levy, Eran Tabib, Eila Lishinsky, vocals.

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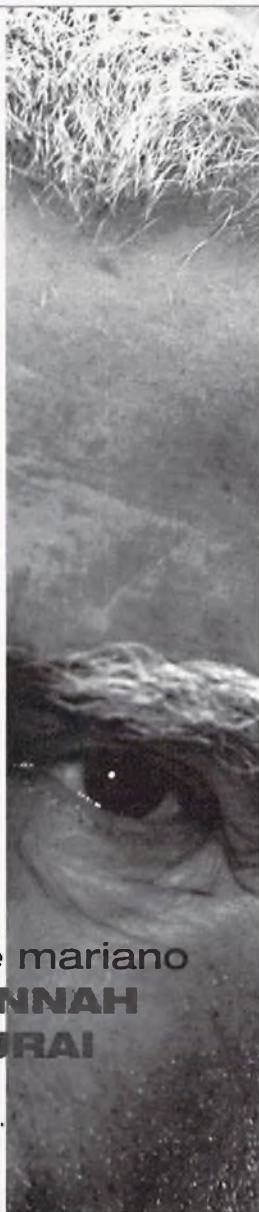
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


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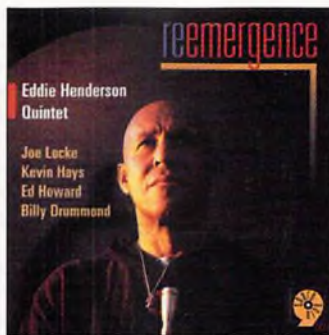


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Chase Music Group 8054

★★★★

Both with albums under his name and for others as well, Eddie Henderson has reestablished himself as a potent, post-bop trumpeter and improviser, once again earning the high regard that was his when he played with Herbie Hancock and many others in the '70s and '80s.

Recorded in March 1998, *Reemergence* is hearty, modern yet swinging stuff that will wear well. It features Henderson's current quintet-pianist Kevin Hays, vibist Joe Locke and bassist Ed Howard, though Billy Drummond is now in for Lewis Nash. The timbral affinity of trumpet and vibes allows for subtle dynamic shifts that give the music a broad range of tonal colors.

Wayne Shorter's "This Is For Albert" sports a boisterous Henderson, who is booted nicely by Drummond's sprightly kit work. Woody Shaw's "Sweet Love" is a juicy bossa where the leader emits a dulcet sound and mixes punchy, brief ideas with '90s bebop lines. He makes the small statement sound so musical.

Henderson's ethereal, floating "Dream" finds Hays delivering placid notes before the leader's contrasting, charged thoughts. Locke's "Saturn's Child" is a lovely slow waltz, where his solo comprises spare, heartfelt notes and subsequent larger clusters: piles of leaves undone by the wind. Henderson is particularly emotive here and on the tender "Natsuko-san."

On the album's centerpiece, "The Gershwin Suite," Henderson states "The Man I Love"

with warmth, then inserts sizzling double-times into his solo. "Summertime" has a funk-groove that lends itself to open-minded improvs; Henderson picks luscious notes, but not obvious ones, on "Embraceable You."

Locke, who is worthy of the increased attention he's getting, teams up with like-minded pianist David Hazeltine for *Mutual Admiration Society*, also made last year. Drummond and bassist Essiet Essiet flesh out the band. This session recalls dates that paired Locke inspiration Bobby Hutcherson with one important Hazeltine influence, McCoy Tyner, but it has its own sound.

For example, there's the very slow bossa-rock version of "Say A Little Prayer," which uncovers an unexpected beauty in this pop theme. Locke's solo quietly sings. Then there's the car-catching, also-bossa look at "For All We Know." Hazeltine achieves a smooth lyrical bent à la Cedar Walton, another powerful model.

For modernity, there's Locke's "Haze Factor," which has an open-door feeling in terms of time and harmony, and the moderate-paced though heated "K-Man's Crew." Here, Essiet sets up a vamp-ish mode with half-time figures that give Drummond freedom to bash pleasingly. Locke's solo is a bit note-heavy. The bassist shifts to walking lines to back Hazeltine, who is in a more relaxed mood.

Less intense are the Hazeltine number "Tears In Her Heart" and the vibist's succulent tribute to Don Grolnick, "Diamonds Remain." On each, the leaders extemporize with genuine sentiment.

Locke and vibist Charlie Shoemake are also mutual fans. The latter's new *Uncrowned Kings* should bring some overdue recognition to the former Shearing sideman and ace improv teacher.

Shoemake splits the program of not-often-heard jazz classics and standards between two solid trios that bring depth and excitement to the music: bassist Luther Hughes plus drummer Paul Kreibich, and bassist Fred Atwood with guitarist Chris Forman.

The latter threesome tackles Jimmy Raney's "Signal," with its go-stop-go theme. Forman swings handily, creating a nice up-and-down flow. Then Shoemake digs in, investigating the chords but adding rich details, too.

On "Struttin' With Some Barbeque," Shoemake is verbose, playing oodles of notes when fewer, or simply more pauses, would have been just fine. In contrast, the deliciously crawling "Way Down Yonder" finds the leader telling an unaffected tale with pretty, hip notes, followed by Forman's inviting octave statements. Everything's buoyed by Atwood's big-toned bass.

With Hughes and Kreibich, Shoemake delivers loads of intricate, mostly appealing statements on Hank Mobley's medium-fast "Avila & Tequila." The same goes for Kenny Dorham's "Minor's Holiday" and Bird's "Constellation." The man can cook creatively at any tempo. Kreibich is a burner throughout. Sonny Clark's "Royal Flush" is more moderate and showcases Hughes' ample tones.

—Zan Stewart

Reemergence: This Is For Albert; Dreams; The Gershwin Suite; The Man I Love; Summertime; It Ain't Necessarily So; Embraceable You; Sweet Love of Mine; Saturn's Child; Natsuko-san. (56:31).

Personnel: Eddie Henderson, trumpet; Joe Locke, vibes;

Kevin Hays, piano; Ed Howard, bass; Billy Drummond, drums.

Mutual Admiration Society: K-Man's Crew; I Say A Little Prayer; Can We Talk; The Haze Factor; Tears In Her Heart; Spring Will Be A Little Late; Diamonds Remain; For All We Know. (60:32)

Personnel: Joe Locke, vibes; David Hazeltine, piano; Essiet Essiet, bass; Drummond, drums.

Uncrowned Kings & Long Lost Things: Signal; Avila & Tequila; 'Way Down Yonder In New Orleans; Minor's Holiday; Just A Gigolo; Royal Flush; Struttin' With Some Barbeque; The Heather On The Hill; Blue N' Boogie; Constellation; Waltzin'. (58:51)

Personnel: Charlie Shoemake, vibes; Bruce Forman, guitar (1, 3, 5, 7, 9); Fred Atwood (1, 3, 5, 7, 9), Luther Hughes (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11), bass; Paul Kreibich (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11), drums.



Michel Petrucciani

Solo Live
Dreyfus Jazz 36597

★★★★

If you want a fond keepsake of a pianist whose passing has left a gaping hole in many hearts, but whose recording legacy is decidedly uneven, pick up this live album of a breathtaking February 1997 solo concert in Frankfurt. This is one of those rare performances in which every note seems felt, and literally sings with passion. Like Bill Evans, Michel Petrucciani had a percussive attack and clarion tone, which he used in the service of lyrical rhapsodies, limpid ballads and immaculately articulated sprints, all represented here. In fact, the repertoire will be familiar to fans—"Caravan," the oddly favored "Besame Mucho," and the many originals worked over time and again, such as "Rachid," "Chloe Meets Gershwin," "Home" and "Looking Up." The level of performance is extraordinary.

One of the challenges of solo piano is momentum (swing, if you prefer), and by this point Petrucciani had evolved a clipped, sprung, left-hand move for that purpose, which drew from Monk's stride strategy. On the delightfully insouciant "Little Piece In C For U," the French pianist exaggerates a hesitation in this move, so that two opposing meters develop; straightening things out, he lets fly with streamers of notes over a rumbling boogie bass. Wonderful. Nodding to Keith Jarrett, Petrucciani infuses gentle gospel resolutions into the warm ballad "Rachid," and grace notes into the melody of the lyrical "Looking Up."

But the masterpiece here is "Trilogy In Blois," a tapestry of moods inspired by morning, noon and evening light. Petrucciani alternates between exquisite stillness and exalted

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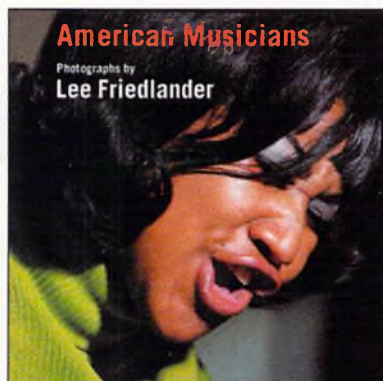
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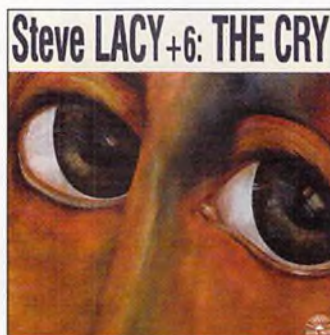
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activity, bringing to bear his deep roots in 19th century piano literature. Encores are a bore, so one sighs a bit when a speedy showcase on "She Did It Again/A Train" follows the crowd-pleasing closer, "Caravan," but it hardly seems like good form to complain about such an embarrassment of riches. —Paul de Barros

Solo Live: Looking Up; Besame Mucho; Rachid; Chloë Meets Gershwin; Home; Brazilian Like; Little Piece In C For U; Romantic But Not Blue; Trilogy In Blois (Morning Sun, Noon And Night Sun In Blois); Caravan; She Did It Again/Take the A Train/She Did It Again; 55:49

Personnel: Michel Petrucciani, piano.



Steve Lacy + 6

The Cry

Soul Note 121315

★★★

Being a huge Steve Lacy fan, and an eager follower of his poetry projects, I wish I liked this album better, particularly given its compelling politics. *The Cry* is a 13-part oratorio (or "jam opera," as he calls it) using a dozen poems by Bangladeshi activist Taslima Nasrin and one by 5th century B.C. Indian poet Ambapali. Lacy met Nasrin, who has been relentlessly persecuted at home for advocating women's liberation, in 1996, when a German arts foundation invited them to Berlin for separate, year-long residencies. Struck by her poems (and the rather frightening 24-hour security around her), Lacy suggested a collaboration. Nasrin performed at the January 1997 premiere of *The Cry*, but later dropped out. Lacy re-mounted the piece in Paris, using long-time vocalist and companion Irene Aebi, recording it live, on March 8, 1998. The instrumentation is for voice, two reeds, harpsichord, accordion, bass and percussion.

Nasrin's poems are powerful testaments of rage, condemnation, heartbreak, lust and desire in a country where women are treated like medieval chattel and, according to Nasrin, a man can with impunity throw acid on the face of a young girl who refuses to marry him. Some of the settings work well. I particularly liked the lovely rise and fall of "Straight Path," the thumb-piano-inspired melody on "Desir D'Amour" and the contrary, jazz-like movement of "Rundown (Ambapali Speaks)." (Though leavened with tango and waltz rhythms, *The Cry* is not a swing piece.) But elsewhere, Lacy's relentlessly marching, intervallic melodies, with their ambiguous tonality, and Aebi's stately (if technically impressive) style, seemed out of

place. "Character," for example, is an ironic warning to young women that they are considered sexual objects, yet forbidden sexual desire, but the music is merely ominous and threatening. A bitter put-down of a philandering husband, "Divorce Letter" proceeds with mechanical regularity, but not rage. Lacy is also overfond of the imitative Elizabethan device whereby the word "fall" descends in pitch, the word "mosquito" is followed by instruments making whining noises, and a poem titled "Aggression" features a drum solo.

Musically, the piece displays more unity than one would expect (the poems are grouped roughly as a narrative from childhood to old age), but there is not much integration between the sung sections and the often stimulating group-improv sections that follow. Overall, Lacy seems to have responded more to Nasrin's dark message, admittedly rather overwhelming, than to the quite lyrical, and diverse, music in her lines. —Paul de Barros

The Cry: Cannonade; Character; Straight Path; Granary; Divorce Letter; Divided; Aggression; Desir D'Amour; Body Theory; Dark and Handsome; Acquaintance; The Cry; Rundown (Ambapali Speaks). (32:35/50:29)

Personnel: Steve Lacy, soprano saxophone; Irene Aebi, voice; Tina Wrase, soprano and soprano saxophone, bass clarinet; Petia Kaufman, harpsichord; Cathrin Pfeifer, accordion; Jean-Jacques Avenel, bass; Daniel "Topo" Gioia, percussion.



Gato Barbieri

Che Corazón

Columbia 69690

★★★

Latino America

Impulse! 236

★★★★½

It's a challenge to reconcile Gato Barbieri in 1999 with the diverse musical lives he's led.

His journey of 30-plus years encompasses ferocious improvisations, a lush hit soundtrack, aggressive Latin jazz and commercial pop-dance formats, leading him most recently to "contemporary jazz" radio. *Che Corazón* presents Barbieri's distinctively rough-edged tone in atmospheric, moody settings, but doesn't consistently test the saxophonist. "Blue Eyes" offers some of Gato's inventive playing on the date, letting him improvise over the groove defined by Mark Egan's bass and decorated by percussionists Sammy Figueroa and David

Charles. "Seven Servants" and "Eclipse" recall the smoky ambiance of *Last Tango In Paris*. *Che Corazón's* best track, "Sweet Glenda," is also its least representative. Recorded with just piano and a Latin rhythm section, this fleet, joyful track approaches straight Latin jazz more closely than anything Barbieri's done in years. Producer/guitarist Chuck Loeb places the horn front and center with little clutter, but, apart from the Metheny-esque "Cristiano," Loeb seems content to evoke '70s successes like *Caliente*. One suspects that airplay motivated a superfluous re-make of "I Want You" and a dubious rendering of "Auld Lang Syne."

Latino America pulls the disparate elements of Barbieri's career into perspective, linking his post-Coltrane approach to the tenor with the rhythms and instruments of Brazil and his native Argentina, and also the "cinematic" perspective of *Last Tango*. This two-CD reissue compiles the results of Barbieri's 1973 and 1974 travels to Argentina and Brazil, where he recorded with local ensembles. Originally released as *Latin America, Chapter One* and *Chapter Two* and long unavailable, the sessions are augmented with restored full-length masters and five unreleased tracks, including dramatically different alternate takes recorded with different personnel. Festive tracks like "Encontros" and "Marissea" enjoy a loose, jam-session quality. The large ensembles establish vamps colored by folk themes and indigenous instruments, such as quena (Indian flute) and bombo India (Indian drum). As the rhythms shift and grow turbulent, Barbieri's fervent solos increase in intensity with each "chorus," while remaining true to the theme. In contrast, "Nunca Mas" (featuring bandoneonist Dino Saluzzi) and "India" present a lighter, more lyrical sound, with "India" evoking indigenous folk music through use of the quena and arpa India (Indian harp). The four "chapters" of *Latin America* contain much of Gato's best work on record. (The live *Chapter Four* remains in the vaults, for now.) For those who think Barbieri broke in with *Last Tango In Paris* and *Caliente*, *Latino America* should be mandatory listening.

—Jon Andrews

Che Corazón: Introduction; Cristiano; I Want You; Seven Servants; Blue Eyes; Eclipse; 1812; The Woman On The Lake; Rosa; Sweet Glenda; Encounter; Auld Lang Syne; Finale. (57:07)

Personnel: Gato Barbieri, tenor saxophone; Chuck Loeb, guitars (2-9, 11-13); Mike Ricchiuti, keyboards (2-9, 11, 12); Mitchell Forman (3), Bill O'Connell (10), piano; Will Lee (2), Ron Jenkins (3), Mark Egan (4, 5, 9, 11, 12), Mario Rodriguez (10), John Beale (12), bass; Lionel Cardew (2, 4-9, 11, 12), Wolfgang Haffner (3), Robbie Gonzalez (10), Dave Ratocek (12), drums; David Charles (2-9, 11, 13), Sammy Figueroa (2, 4-9, 11, 12), Richie Flores (10), percussion; Frank McComb, lead vocal (3); Carmen Cuestra (2, 3, 8), Peter Valentine (2, 3), backing vocals.

Latino America: Encuentros; India; La China Leoncia Arreo La Correntinada Trajo Entre La Muchachada La Flor De La Juventud; Nunca Mas; La China Leoncia...; Nunca Mas; Gato Gato; To Be Continued; Encontros; Latino America; Marissea; Para Nosotros; Juana Azurduy; Latino America; Maté. (61:17/65:18)

Personnel: Gato Barbieri, tenor saxophone, flute (7), voice; Raul Mercado, quena (1-3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15); Amadeo Monges, arpa India (1-3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15); Ricardo Lew (1, 3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15), Lee Ritenour (7), electric guitar; Quelo Palacios, classical guitar, charango (1-3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15); John Pisano, classical guitar (7), Helio Delmiro, guitar (8, 9, 11, 14); Daudeth De Azevaco (Neco), cavaco (8, 9, 11, 14); Isoca Fumero, charango (1, 3, 13); Adalberto Cevasco (1-6, 10, 12, 13, 15), Novelli (8, 9, 11, 14), fender bass; Jim Hughart, bass (7, 11); Pocho Lapublie (1, 3, 13), Bob Zimitti (7), Paulo Antonio Braga (Paulinho) (8, 9, 11,

14) drums; Domingo Cura, bombo Indio (1-3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15); Antonio Pantoja, anapa, erke, siku, quena, erkencho (1-3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15); El Zurdo Roizner, drums, percussion (1-3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15); Jorge Padin (1, 3, 13), Mayuto Correa (7, 11), percussion; Osvaldo Bellingieri, piano (4); Dino Saluzzi, bandoneon (4); Escola do Samba do Niteroi, percussion section (8, 9, 11, 14).



Ivo Perelman
Brazilian Watercolour
 Leo Records 266

★★★★

Brazil is hip again on these shores. Some of America's biggest rock luminaries have been expressing their debt to the '60s Tropicalia movement. Brazilian stars are finding newfound audiences in the U.S. Of course, jazz, the samba and bossa nova have been intertwined for years, and so it's not a major shock that saxophonist Ivo Perelman revisits his native South America on this bustling disc.

While plenty of saxophonists have embraced Albert Ayler's overtones and screeches, Perelman is one of the few who reminds listeners that one of the most crucial elements in his influential '60s work was a sense of almost unbridled fun. Perelman's spirits certainly rejoice throughout much of *Brazilian Watercolour*. On most of the disc, he leads a group that includes percussionists/flautists Cyro Baptista and Guilherme Franco as well as drummer Rashied Ali. They're buoyant right from the first note. Perelman wails over the chords to Brazilian singer Marcos Valle's "Summer Samba" and gives a new interpretation to Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Desafinado." After hearing Perelman's Ayleresque treatment, these Brazilian pop tunes should not be thought of as purely relaxing warm-weather grooves. The rhythm section is also impressive; Ali demonstrates his fortitude not through showing off his own pyrotechnique, but with quiet hits on the bass drum that serve as the background to Franco and Baptista.

Alongside the sax-and-percussion tracks, Perelman performs five of his own compositions in a duo with pianist Matthew Shipp. The Perelman/Shipp recordings are from an earlier session, and their inclusion on this disc becomes an interesting contrast to the quartet. Shipp's brooding, sudden shifts play well against Perelman's trembling lines. The mood is a divergence from the quartet's ebullience. Perelman also indulges in a little piano noodling himself, as well as some light recorder playing. These novelty bits are kept sensibly brief.

—Aaron Cohen

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Brazilian Watercolour: Brazilian Watercolour; Ascendent; Desafinado; Traces; Summer Samba; Recitativo; Rimbotim; Explicativo; Pal Piteira; Flauting; The Boat; Pandeiros. (59:24)

Personnel: Ivo Perelman, tenor saxophone, recorder (10), piano (7:12); Matthew Shipp, piano; Rashied Ali, drums; Guilherme Franco, percussion, wooden flute (10); Cyro Baptista, percussion, wooden flute (10).



Lynne Arriale

A Long Road Home

TCB 97952

★★★★½

Melody

TCB 99552

★★★★½

Lynne Arriale has shifted smoothly from an early interest in classical music (she has an MA from the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music) to a dedicated, developing jazz artist. These two albums show that she is well on her way to achieving a singular voice as a pianist, and as a leader.

A modernist, the now-NYC-based pianist has built an approach similar to such aces as Bill Evans, Chick Corea and Richie Beirach. She values looseness in her presentation, exhibits a glowing sound, offers a well-rounded compositional stance, a supple improvisatory sensibility and a rhythmic litheness. Arriale's not a swinger in the Wynton Kelly sense, nor is she a player with a deep blues essence, but what she does, she does quite well.

A Long Road Home, made in April 1997, is Arriale's fourth trio CD; three for DMP precede it. While drummer Steve Davis is a holdover, this is bassist John Patitucci's debut with the leader, and he fits right in. The program of fresh originals and jazz and pop standards suits Arriale's strengths. Monk's quirky, appealing "Bye-Ya," taken at a medium-slow, quasi-funk groove, is liberally explored by the participants. Here, the pianist is not afraid to offer her interpretation of the composer's idiosyncratic style, and Patitucci delivers a gritty solo. "A Night In Tunisia" is brisk and imaginative, with the theme and harmony slightly altered: Arriale uses her own 8-bar intro as an interlude as well; Gillespie's classic interlude is heard only at the close. "I Wished On The Moon," done at a medium bounce, has a finger-popping drive punched by the ace trapsman Davis. "Wouldn't It Be Lovely" is played achingly slow, with winsome melodic thoughts from the pianist and the bold-toned bassist. "Con Alma" is even slower, classical in quality, with the exquisitely simple theme offered as a climax.

Of Arriale's originals, "The Dove" has a somewhat exotic, folk-like mood. "Will O' The Wisp" and the closing title track both contain some similarly plaintive, heartfelt elements; each is underpinned by a quiet rhythmic throb.

The subsequent *Melody*, with the decidedly impressive Scott Colley replacing Patitucci, was made last December. Here, Arriale does indeed focus on mellifluousness in a set of four originals, four standards and William Walton's "Touch Her Soft Lips And Part," from his score to the film *Henry V* (1945).

The opening "Turning" starts as a medium, open-minded waltz, and segues into a 4/4 blazer. It's the first of three Celtic-tinged pieces here. The others are "Dance," with its ethnic-based melody, traditional drum beat and spirited piano improv, and the speedy "The Highlands," which retains its Celtic flavor as Arriale bashes out a powerhouse solo. On the latter, the propulsive Davis scores with a whirring, sizzling, across-the-kit solo.

Walton's "Touch" is tenderness all the way, Arriale starting with a sweet-noted solo, followed by Colley, albeit briefly. "The Forgotten Ones" is also quite slow, though here a sense of sadness rather than repose permeates. "But Beautiful" is played through without improvisation, and with care.

Of the others, "Beautiful Love" is choice. It opens rubato, and becomes boisterously inter-

active. Arriale's lines lead logically to the next, and Colley delivers another of his fat-toned, horn-line-like solos.

—Zan Stewart

A Long Road Home: Bye-Ya; Will O' The Wisp; A Night In Tunisia; Wouldn't It Be Lovely; Letters From Mike O'Brien; Con Alma; I Wished On The Moon; The Dove; The Long Road Home. (55:55)
Personnel: Lynn Arriale, piano; John Patitucci, bass; Steve Davis, drums.

Melody: Turning; The Forgotten Ones; Beautiful Love; But Beautiful; Dance; Hush-A-Bye; It Ain't Necessarily So; Touch Her Soft Lips And Part; The Highlands. (54:27)

Personnel: Lynn Arriale, piano; Scott Colley, bass; Steve Davis, drums.



Pharoah Sanders

Save Our Children

Verve 314 557 297

★★½

Getting in touch with the ecstatic is a time-honored motive for music-making, and Pharoah Sanders has been doing it with a great deal of success for several decades now. Until recently, his chosen path has been meditative, but on his last two albums, with Bill Laswell as producer, Sanders has taken another, equally ancient route to revelation: rhythm and dance. Using a world music platform that sources reggae, dub, Indian, African, Middle Eastern and gospel, Sanders and Laswell shoot for a synthesis of the ecstatic and the worldly under the urgent banner of *Save Our Children*. They do not always succeed.

Whatever is accomplished on the title cut by engulfing Sanders' transportive, magical sound with the gothic synthesizers and thumping



Guillermo Gregorio Trio Red Cube

These 1998 performances are part of a continuing process of growth which has gone on over at least ten years, and probably much longer. ... At least, the use of elements of jazz along with elements of contemporary classical music in a close and shifting relationship seems to have results unlike anything being attempted elsewhere. In fact there is a double integration here, between aspects of contemporary classical music and jazz, and between the players taking part.



Ellery Eskelin & Han Bennink Dissonant Characters

Maybe it helps to know that Han and Ellery are both good chess players. Bennink favors an offensive game to be sure, but Eskelin is conspicuously untraumatized, knowing that with Bennink (switched metaphor ahead) the idea is not to steer the bull but to keep from being thrown. And Han, to his audible pleasure, discovers a rare, fully equipped improviser he can't scare off, wear out, bury or give the slip.



Steve Lacy Seven Clichés

Here we have an act of transformation, or several. All art, of course, enacts and entertains this process—a perpetual dance of cognition, change, and recognition. ... The surviving pieces have not changed over time but, as listeners, we certainly have, as has Steve Lacy, and so while what we hear may be the same the way we hear it is dramatically different. ... Once a broad Prospectus, now an ironic look at Clichés. But clichéd? Anything but.

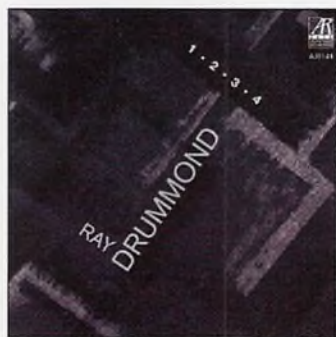
backbeats of contemporary club music frankly eludes me, though I suppose there is some populist method in this madness. A meganymn that seems to have erupted from a gospel arena show, its rock drums, raps, keyboard grandeur and basso background vocals no doubt give it a better chance than jazz to be heard by a wide public. But does anyone really need a loudspeaker to hear what Pharoah Sanders has to say?

The better, quieter cuts bring home the point. "My Jewels Of Love" features Pharoah the sweet inner traveler, jamming modally on soprano over shimmering tamboura (the credits say harmonium), echoing and looping, as Zakir Hussain and Trilok Gurtu play delightful tabla. "Kazuko," the highlight of the disc, has an Edenic, first-morning-in-the-world feel, with fluttering tenor saxophone over harmonium washes. But "The Ancient Song," in spite of some valiant, matadorian shrieks, is overblown with gothic synthesizers; ditto for "Far-Off Sand," save for some lovely tabla and vocal exchanges.

One of the problems here is just plain schmaltz, which all the brilliant production in the world can't cover up. Is the Martin Denny exotica on "Midnight In Berkeley Square," for example, some kind of joke, or are we meant to take it seriously? I'm in technical awe of Laswell's panoramic stairways to heaven, but my sincere hope is that God has better taste than he does. —Paul de Barros

Save Our Children: Save Our Children; Midnight In Berkeley Square; My Jewels Of Love; Kazuko; The Ancient Song; Far-Off Sand. (59:10)

Personnel: Pharoah Sanders, tenor and soprano saxophones, double reed, bells, percussion, voice; William Henderson, piano, harmonium; Bernie Worrell, organ, electric piano, synthesizers; Tony Cedras, harmonium; Jeff Bova, synthesizers, programming; Alex Blake, acoustic bass; Zakir Hussain, tablas, wooden box, mbira, voice; Trilok Gurtu, drums, tablas, percussion; Abdou Mboup, talking drum, voice; Abiodun Oyewole, voice; Asante, voices.



Ray Drummond

1-2-3-4

Arabesque Jazz 141



It's possible to admire the organization of Ray Drummond's 1-2-3-4 as much as the caliber of the quartet's musicianship. Drummond blends originals with covers of tunes by Wayne Shorter, John Coltrane, Ron Carter and others, selecting compositions that are familiar, but not overdone. The resulting program sustains a sophisticated mood, sounding inviting, but

never trite. Shorter's "Ana Maria" sets the sensual, swinging tone for the date, featuring a warm, melodic solo from Drummond. On soprano sax, Craig Handy manages to take Shorter's gorgeous tune in new directions, without mimicking the composer. The pattern continues with engaging mid-tempo performances of Drummond's "Driftn'," Carter's "Little Waltz" and Shorter's "Nefertiti."

Drummond uses various sub-units of his quartet for variety, along with a few change-ups. The leader is featured on an expressive solo performance of Duke Ellington's "Prelude To A Kiss" and on a strong, evenly matched duet of Coltrane's "Mr. P.C." with drummer Billy Hart. This bassist favors the deepest, darkest regions of his instrument's range. On this recording, the bass vibrates through the floorboards, or rattles the door panels of your car. Handy impresses

throughout with inventive, melodic soloing, but doesn't truly cut loose until "Goin' Home." On that track, he starts with a deep, roots sound on tenor, and his solos gather force, evoking Coltrane and ultimately recalling Albert Ayler's foray into spirituals. Two blowing vehicles, "What Is Happening Here?" and "Oh Jay," also showcase the under-appreciated saxophonist. The liner notes describe Drummond's goals as "straight-ahead, strive for tone." The quartet accomplishes this and considerably more.

—Jon Andrews

1-2-3-4: Ana Maria; Ballade Poetique; Driftn'; Prelude To A Kiss; What Is Happening Here?; Little Waltz; Goin Home; Kinda Like; Nefertiti; Mr. P.C.; Oh Jay; Willow Weep For Me. (67:06)

Personnel: Ray Drummond, bass; Craig Handy, tenor and soprano saxophones; Stephen Scott, piano; Billy Hart, drums.

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JAZZ

True Chirps

by Zan Stewart

Sigmund Freud is said to have asked, "What do women want?" Well, if he'd focused on the violin instead of changing the way we think, he'd know the answer: Women want ... to sing! OK, I'm teasing. But jazz wouldn't be what it is without its hip chirps—the bop term for female singers. One chanteuse, Ruth Price, was dubbed "True Chirp" by anagram whiz Gerry Mulligan. Here, then, is a nest of true chirps, ladies who aver, it would seem, that without a song the day wouldn't even begin, let alone never end.

Diane Schuur: *Music Is My Life* (Atlantic 83150; 57:04) ★★★★★ The luxurious-voiced Schuur is subdued and natural here; the meat of the songs shines through. We're talking winners, from Carroll Coates' upbeat title track and the sassy yet rarely heard "Old Devil Called Love" to the delicious "Bewitched" and poignant "Good Morning Heartache." Schuur as pianist offers "Nardis," though she's no Alan Broadbent, her ace accompanist-soloist. Nino Tempo adds some Getzian tenor.

Dena DeRose: *Another World* (Sharp Nine 1016; 55:50) ★★★★★½ New York-based DeRose is a major find. She both sings and plays piano like a million bucks, often displaying the talents in a single outing, as on the percolating "More Than You Know." On "Hi Fly," she works sans vocal, offering provocative harmonies. Her comely alto voice lights up the sultry "You Don't Know What Love Is." The dynamic cast includes altoist Steve Wilson, trombonist Steve Davis and trumpeter Ingrid Jensen.

Jeanne Trevor: *Love You Madly* (Catalyst Productions 021999; 62:27) ★★★★★ Trevor, who recorded in the mid '60s, has been active in St. Louis for many years. Her husky alto—with hints of Dinah Washington and Lena Horne—is a pleasure. This veteran is a storyteller, typified by the come-hither "Spring Can Hang You Up The Most," where slight melodic liberties are taken. Trevor's a swinger, too—"Savoy" and "Visit Me" tell you that.

Dominique Eade: *The Long Way Home* (RCA Victor 63296; 52:02) ★★★★★½ Eade, from Boston, thirsts for freshness. She mostly succeeds on her second RCA date, where she's surrounded by dynamos like bassist Dave Holland, guitarist Mick Goodrick, pianist Bruce Barth and drummer Victor Lewis. A bit of an acquired taste, Eade turns Elton John/Bernie Taupin's "Come Down In Time" into a heartfelt ballad, makes Ornette's difficult "All My Life" quite winsome and trades deft fours with Lewis on "Baltimore Oriole." An inviting composer, Eade's chief drawback is she indulges in de rigueur scatting.

Joyce: *Astronauta: Songs Of Elis* (Blue Jackel 5029; 59:34) ★★★★★½ This exquisite album, a tribute to the great Brazilian singer Elis Regina and the idiom MPB (Musica Popular Brasileira) in general, spotlights another Brazilian wonder. Joyce sings, writes, plays guitar, all with persuasive command. Here, she investigates evergreens—"Waters Of March" (sung with Dori Caymmi), "Aquarela Do Brasil"—and lesser-known numbers with grand clan. She's abetted by such jazz aces as Renee Rosnes, Mulgrew Miller and Joe Lovano.

Karen Gallinger: *My Foolish Heart* (SeaBreeze 3027; 50:57) ★★★★★½ Southern Californian Gallinger sometimes sings jazz, sometimes blues. Here, it's the former save one foot-stomping corker. In a wide-ranging voice—one hears traces of Cleo

Many tunes, perhaps too many, have rubato intros by Anderson.

Catherine Dupuis: *I Hear Music* (JBQ 103; 50:25) ★★★ Almost all the familiar songs delivered here by the talented Dupuis have been outfitted with unusual arrangements. "I Love You" goes to a fast 12/8 for the chorus, then snappy swing for the bridge. The bolero-like "Let's Face The Music" is a killer; so's the original, "Sequined Mermaid Dress." Eventually, more simplicity is called for. Pianist Bill Mays, bassist Jon Burr and drummer Terry Clarke are wonders in support and solo spots.

Sandy Cressman: *Homenagem Brasileira (Homage To Brazil)* (A Records 73134; 56:58) ★★★★★½ San Francisco Bay Area-based Cressman speaks Portuguese and has an innate feel for that land's music. Backed by



Dominique Eade: thirst for freshness

Laine—Gallinger tackles such favorites as "Gentle Rain," "Just Friends" and "The Way You Look Tonight" with spirit.

Chris Anderson & Sabina Sciubba: *You Don't Know What Love Is* (Naim 030; 60:04) ★★★ Chicago-born pianist Anderson is in his 70s, Munich-born singer Sciubba is in her mid-20s. Aided by bassist David Williams and drummer Billy Higgins, they explore 10 classics. Goodies include a vibrant stroll through "Polka Dots And Moonbeams," or the sublime bossa "Estate." On some reflective numbers like "Lazy Afternoon," though, Sciubba lacks depth.

Rio-born pianist Marcos Silva, she cranks out an appealing program that includes Nascimento's "Viola Violar" and Jobim's "Felicidade."

Claire Martin: *Take My Heart* (Linn AKD 093; 47:05) ★★★★★½ Here, U.K. chanteuse Martin offers a jazz sensibility to a mostly pop program (originals, classics, a standard). "Only The Lonely," done at a breathy crawl with strings, socks you in the gut, as does "Pleading Guilty." The bluesy Rupert Holmes romper, "Queen Bee," is swell, as is Paul Simon's "Jonah." A single downer: "Take My Heart" is too '60s rock-like to fit. **DB**

BEYOND

Lights! Camera! Music!

by Frank-John Hadley

Oranj Symphonette: *The Oranj Album* (Ryko 10455; 49:27) ★★★★★ The stream of consciousness behind a typical measure of this San Francisco band's pop-jazz is equal parts whimsy and seriousness, camp and esthetics. On their second release they walk the tightrope between polarities with ease. Their musical execution is of high quality, and their interpretations of a baker's dozen "popular favorites" (most lifted from movies released between 1960 and '71) hold endless fascination. Cellist/bassist Brubeck, in particular, is revealed as an arranger of skill and imagination, channeling the surf's-up dementia on "Beat Girl" and combining cello, accordion, clarinet and various audio to achieve the mock-pathetic mood of "Valley Of The Dolls."

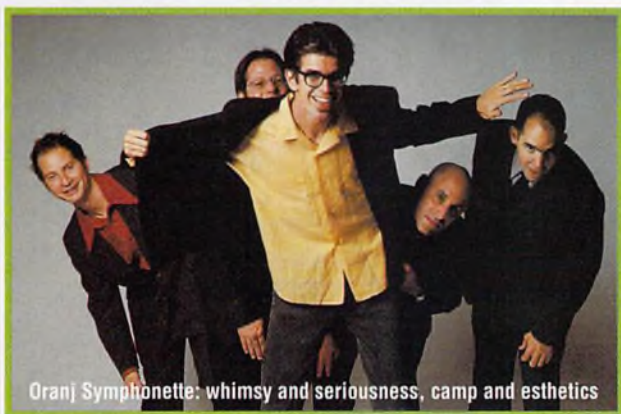
Various Artists: *Mission Accomplished, Too* (Hip-O 40121; 44:57) ★★★★★ You'll have a hard time finding a more exciting domestic collection of new and old spy, cope and private eye music than this one. Hugo Montenegro displays cool command and startling freshness of invention in his gutsy arrangements for "The Theme From Man From U.N.C.L.E." and "The Invaders," both from the hit spy comedy. Producer/conductor/arranger Michael Omartian has Rhythm Heritage ride disco beat hard on "S.W.A.T.," and Quincy Jones makes sure the members of his big band give stealthy or emphatic feeling to their lines on "Ironside." Two jazz-infused selections from the more recent past provide exuberant pleasure: The James Taylor Quartet resuscitate "Starsky And Hutch," and the young British percussionist Snowboy, with the assistance of a crisp horn band, nails "The New Avengers."

Kalyanji, Anandji: *Bombay The Hard Way* (Motel 3; 48:22) ★★★ Ludicrous action movies made in Bombay in the late '60s and early '70s shamelessly parroted the hit movies of James Bond and righteous black private investigators in their incidental music and everything else. No Indian film composers were more prolific, fantastical and shameless than brothers Kalyanji and Anandji V. Shah, who cobbled Western funk, pseudo-jazz, surf and native Rajasthan rhythms together then tossed cheesy melodies on top of them. And the dizzy fun of

the original incarnations of, say, "Punjabis, Pimps & Players" only gets heightened by new drums and guitar parts in album producer Dan the Automator's "mix translation."

Wendy Carlos: *Clockwork Orange* (East Side Digital 81362; 46:54) ★★★½ In 1971, Carlos and Rachel Elkind pushed their synthesizers and other electronic gear to their limit for the score to Stanley Kubrick's violent film version of writer Anthony Burgess' parable on a terrifying future. Treatments of Beethoven, Rossini and Purcell pieces, along with previously released and unreleased original music, evince a measure of warmth that contrasts with the clinical, pitiless, misanthropic world of the movie. The 13-minute-plus suite "Timesteps," only part of which made it to film, uses a vocoder to simulate eerie singing.

Elmer Bernstein: *The Magnificent Seven Soundtrack* (Ryko 10741; 67:39) ★★★★★; *Return Of The Magnificent Seven Soundtrack* (Ryko 10714; 34:52) ★ Bernstein provided director John Sturges' 1960 western (based on Akira Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai*) with dramatic sweep in his famous theme and score for orchestra, only now released in its entirety. Chris Adams (Yul Brynner) and his hired guns are elevated to mythic status by the thundering urgency of the quasi-classical music, with its



Oranj Symphonette: whimsy and seriousness, camp and esthetics

telling shifts in dynamics, tempi, colors and textures. Bernstein, working from the director's verbal recountal of the story line, works magic from start to finish. The lame sequel, *Return*, merely repeats a bit of the original music and adds soporific new passages.

Phillip Johnston: *Music For Films* (Tzadik 7510; 61:54) ★★★★★ This self-produced album showcases 32 pieces the sax-playing New Yorker has fashioned with customary inventiveness and integrity for two documentaries and a pair of films. He and fellow downtown NYC players cover a considerable amount of emotional and musical territory. There's the provocative calm of "Willie's Room" and the plugged-in, bravura funk of "Pozzi Winning," both from director Philip Haas' widely released, offbeat *Music Of Chance*. Johnston's music for the unknown-in-America crime satire *Geld* changes courses from Jewish Eastern European folk-jazz and accordion-swept neo-schmaltz to boiling-hot r&b to Milesian cool jazz. **DB**

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REISSUES

Saxophone Jones

by Zan Stewart

Admit it: I've got a saxophone jones. It's a voracious habit that must be fed regularly, so I spend a good deal of time checking out reed players past and present. What's particularly pleasing about this batch of reissues is that many of these musicians—Charles McPherson, Lew Tabackin, Phil Woods and Teddy Edwards, to name four—are still with us, playing their you-know-whats off. So check out their current releases, too.

Johnny Griffin/Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis: *The Tenor Scene* (OJC 940; 44:05) ★★★★★½; *Lookin' At Monk* (OJC 1911; 39:04) ★★★★★½ A great two-tenor combo, the formidable swing-boppers Griff and Jaws teamed up between 1960-'62. *The Tenor Scene* was recorded "live" at Minton's in 1961 and spotlights the leaders working with customary bravura and characteristically humorous tones on "I'll Remember April" and a Latin-swing-grooved "Woody 'N You." There's also plenty of solo space for pianist Junior Mance, bassist Larry Gales and drummer Ben Riley. *Lookin' At Monk*, a studio set, finds the same band examining seven Thelonious classics. "In Walked Bud" and "Rhythm-A-Ning" are rompers, while Jaws' tender version of "Ruby, My Dear" is one of two ballads.

Phil Woods/Lew Tabackin (*Evidence* 22209; 58:39) ★★★★★½ Originally made for Omnisound in 1980, this is a delightful pairing. Both altoist Woods and tenorman Tabackin have gorgeously fat sounds (which blend superbly), amazing technical command and fertile imaginations. Their solos, though sometimes quite intense, are decidedly ear-pleasing. The first version of Tadd Dameron's comely "Theme Of No Repeat" has a juicy dual sax extemporization, as does the exquisite, fire-breathing "Limehouse Blues," where both leaders craft stirring stories. "Sweet And Lovely" is a bit more subdued, and "Petite Chanson" finds Woods on clarinet and Tabackin on flute, a welcome contrast to the saxophone heat. The late piano whiz Jimmy Rowles, bassist Michael Moore and drummer/producer Bill Goodwin round out the show.

Teddy Edwards: *Sunset Eyes* (Pacific Jazz 94848; 46:47) ★★★★★ In 1959-'60, when tenor saxophonist Edwards made these tracks for Pacific Jazz, he excelled on funk-injected blues, persuasive ballads and barnburners. (Today at 74, he pretty much still does.) A swarthy tone, that blues bent

and an unshakable feel for the rise and fall of the jazz line makes tunes like the solidly swinging "Vintage '57" and Edwards' bubbling "Sunset Eyes" go down easy. Drummer Billy Higgins and bassist Leroy Vinnegar are among the able cohorts.

Bud Powell/Don Byas: *A Tribute To Cannonball* (Columbia Legacy 65186; 61:22) ★★★★★½ When they recorded this

and Higgins on this 1968 Prestige session. McPherson, a Bird-based fellow with his own thing, goes uptempo for the title track, issuing his trademark twist-turn thoughts. "Lush Life" is a wistful duet with Martino, and "Night Eyes" is a sumptuous Latin bounce.

Lee Konitz: *Motion* (Verve 557 107; 73:22/74:37/75:32) ★★★★★ Altman Konitz, bassist Sonny Dallas and drummers



Teddy Edwards: going down easy

date in Paris in 1961, both the tenor sax master and the bebop piano giant were definitely on. Uptempos like "Cherokee" and "Just One Of Those Things" are played with crisp exactness, swing-to-bopper Byas working with a gently raspy sound and melodic ingenuity. Powell prances, too. On a second "Cherokee," session producer Cannonball Adderley sparkles in a cameo. The ballads "Jackie My Little Cat" and "I Remember Clifford" showcase Byas' inimitable, creamy tone. Throughout, drum innovator Kenny Clarke and bassist Pierre Michelot are aces; trumpeter Idrees Sulieman brightens three cuts.

Charles McPherson: *Horizons* (OJC 1912; 38:40) ★★★★★½ The altoist is joined by guitarist Pat Martino, vibist Nasir Hafiz, pianist Cedar Walton, bassist Walter Booker

Elvin Jones (Disc One) or Nick Stabulas (Discs Two & Three) recorded these 36 tracks in August 1961. All the Stabulas cuts and two of the Jones numbers are first issued here. Konitz states a snippet of the theme to such standards as "I Remember You" and "All Of Me" and then takes off; it's essentially pure improvisation. The leader's idiosyncratic murmuring-then-singing sound and his fluid, Pres-meets-Bird solo style is ideally suited to Jones' deliciously jangling swing feel and Dallas' plump thump. Elsewhere, Stabulas' beat seems a bit more confining, but Konitz flows nonetheless. **DB**

Original Down Beat ratings:

- *The Tenor Scene*: ★★½ (4/27/61)
- *Sunset Eyes*: ★★★★★½ (6/8/61)
- *Horizons*: ★★½ (5/29/69)

Ken Peplowski

by Ted Panken

The "Blindfold Test" is a listening test that challenges the featured artist to discuss and identify the music and musicians who performed on selected recordings. The artist is then asked to rate each tune using a 5-star system. No information about the recordings is given to the artist prior to the test.

It's hard to think of a musical area Ken Peplowski hasn't tackled in recent years. So at the conclusion of an intense listening session it was no surprise to hear the 40-year-old clarinet/tenor player comment, "It's nice to hear people try to break the preconceived boundaries of what the clarinet is supposed to be." A 13-record veteran with Concord who made his early reputation as a fluent interpreter of swing-to-bop, Peplowski's recent dates include the June 22 release *Last Swing Of The Century: Big Band Music Of Benny Goodman* and last year's *Grenadilla*.

Sidney Bechet

"Blue Horizon" (from *Hot Jazz On Blue Note*, Blue Note, 1996/rec. 1944) Bechet, clarinet; Art Hodes, piano; Pops Foster, bass; Manzie Johnson, drums.

[Immediately] Sidney Bechet, "Blue Horizon." It's classic, 5 stars. From the first note you can identify that unique vibrato and big woody sound. He had a lot of technique and knew when not to use it, and played with 100 percent feeling. It's a perfect example of playing for yourself in a recording situation and not for posterity, worrying about every single note. These guys are so relaxed, and it's flowing. There's a lesson to be learned: There's too much value put on perfection now.

Artie Shaw

"Dancing On The Ceiling" (from *The Last Recordings Of Artie Shaw*, MusicMasters, 1992/rec. 1954) Shaw, clarinet; Hank Jones, piano; Joe Puma, guitar; Tommy Potter, bass; Irv Kluger, drums.

I could be fooled here. It could be Artie Shaw doing his bop thing. It could be Buddy DeFranco, or possibly Tony Scott. Hank Jones on piano. The light touch gave him away. I know it's not Artie because he does some things that sound like a saxophone player playing the clarinet. [After he's told] My first instinct was correct! It's very interesting, but I think it misses the boat. Certain clarinetists lose their tone when they play more bop-influenced music by adjusting their sound and phrasing instead of interpreting it through their own method. It's a valiant effort, but I prefer his earlier stuff. 3½ stars.

Jimmy Hamilton

"Bluebird Of Delhi" (from *Duke Ellington Orchestra, Far East Suite-Special Mix*, RCA, 1995/rec. 1966).

Far East Suite, "Bluebird Of Delhi." 5 stars. From the first time I heard Jimmy Hamilton, I thought, "This is the direction I want to go." He combines the best of the classical clarinet approach with the improvisatory approach. He could have played in an orchestra, yet he swung like nobody else. This is a great example of how to write for specific soloists, with some of the most beautiful clarinet writing ever. I love the way the ensemble comes in and Jimmy answers them; he had great instinctive ears to know when and when not to play.

Benny Goodman

"Shirley Steps Out" (from *Undercurrent Blues*, Capitol Jazz, 1995/rec. 1947) Goodman, clarinet; Alan Hendrickson, guitar; Mel Powell, piano; Red Norvo, vibes.



As soon as they started improvising, I knew it was Benny. This is one of his bop experiments, a little more successful than Artie's attempt, because Benny plays closer to himself. That was a nice record, really refreshing, and I don't remember hearing it. 4 stars.

David Krakauer

"Atrica Bulgar" (from *Klezmer Madness, Tzadik*, 1995) Krakauer, clarinet; Michael Alpert, accordion; Dave Licht, drums.

Is it Ivo Papasov? It has that quality. It's more a Yiddish groove. Is this Don Byron? I'm not familiar with a lot of the klezmer guys. I love Dave Tarras, the old school, and this has a lot of those elements. 3 stars. I liked it, but it doesn't stand out. I wish he'd played with more passion and used more of the entire range of the clarinet. Not to detract from it, but if I organized a polka band, and worked at the Knitting Factory dressed in funny suits doing exactly what I did in Cleveland when I played weddings, people would think, "Gee, this is the hippest music I can imagine." But if that's a way for people to discover this stuff, that's great, because it is valid and great music. We've reached a stage where we look back at everything that's happened and draw from all these different sources.

John Carter

"Encounter" (from *Comin' On*, Hat Art, 1988) Carter, clarinet; Bobby Bradford, cornet; Don Preston, synthesizer; Richard Davis, bass; Andrew Cyrille, drums.

John Carter. As soon as he started doing the upper register thing, I knew it was him. 5 stars, as many as I can give. John Carter is completely unbridled, which is rare to hear on the clarinet. It's exciting, interesting writing, free and open, but structured with everybody listening to each other. I love the way electronics are integrated into the ensemble. Sometimes you get the feeling it's all been played, then you hear something like that, and you realize there's life yet in music. It's an eye-opener.

DB